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Translated from the Arabic by

SAMUEL ROSENBLATT

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COMMENTARY

DOES DEMOCRACY NEED NAZI PARTNERS?

The Dangerous Course of Our German Reconstruction

NICOLAS CLARION

THE democracies have apparently won the "battle of Berlin." But this "victory" has little relevance to the hard core of the German problem. Policy seems still to flounder among such abstract slogans as "reconstructing a prosperous, democratic Germany"—"safeguarding Europe against a war-making Germany"—"saving Germany, the industrial heart of European revival, for the West." In the meantime, somehow, the fundamental reality is persistently overlooked.

Germany, as the word is today casually employed in thought, speech, and print, no longer exists; nor, in view of the unsolvable antagonisms of the Eastern and Western occupying powers, will it exist within a foreseeable span of time. We visualize Germany as a geographical-political entity—which is exactly what it is not. There are two Germanies, separated by a new frontier far more real than any so-called natural boundaries. The geopolitical coordinates, fixed and immutable according to classic German theory, have been impudently altered by war and politics; the Eastern and Western zones of Germany are separated not only by a heavily patrolled border but by widely contrasting economic and social systems.

Our image of the Germanies today is further falsified to the extent that we persist in using political terms proper only to autonomous states: political structure and alignment, programs of the political parties, the role of the press, and so forth. We forget the simple, all-pervasive fact that military occupation—as well as the tension between the occupying powers—makes German politics and culture essentially "abnormal" and unreal.

At the same time, the realities are there, hard at work at their own tasks. The heart of the struggle is not Berlin, despite its present

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AFTER many months in which the "German problem" seemed to be synonymous with the Berlin air-lift, there has been a resurgence of a deeper interest and concern. The Ilse Koch and von Papen cases; the dismissal of Charles LaFollette; the appearance of old Nazi names in new positions of authority; the forthcoming German industrial exhibit in New York—all have once more brought Germany disquietingly to the fore. Yet the phrase itself—"the German problem"—seems to have lost its bearings and to be drifting with the tides of journalistic stereotypes and political oratory. NICOLAS CLARION here analyzes the major trends in German politics and German society today, and attempts to define the "German problem" in a way that is relevant to the actualities of world politics, and to the declared central aim of American policy—the reconstruction of Germany into a democratic society. M. Clarion is a Rumanian-born French journalist who has contributed articles on Central and Eastern Europe to many periodicals, here and abroad. His book, *Le Glacis Soviétique* ("The Soviet Buffer"), was published last year in Paris.

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glamor as a center of international crises, for the former capital has long lost its role as the keystone of a national structure. In Eastern Germany, the realities revolve about a political axis defined by the Soviet government and its servile Socialist Unity party. In Western Germany, they cluster about the resurrection of the Ruhr—the gigantic industrial ganglion which controls the reflexes of that fantastically artificial entity, Trizonia.

THE Ruhr valley, lying in the British zone of occupation in Germany, remains Europe's most important industrial conglomeration. Today as yesterday, Western Germany's fate as well as that of her neighbors is tied to the Ruhr—Germany's forge and arsenal, the basic sinew of German power. Its steel factories, established side by side with coal or coke depots, produced one-fifth of the world's steel production before the war. Allied bombings, particularly in 1943, struck heavy blows at the factories of these regions; Essen, Duesseldorf, Dortmund, Hamborn, etc., were badly hit. However, despite these wounds—which include the death of a large proportion of the skilled workers, a crisis in housing and food, the disruption of relations between city and countryside, the wearing out of industrial material and equipment—economic life has resumed once more, with an astounding intensity. Daily coal production surpasses 325,000 tons (compared with 400,000 in 1936); steel production has leaped from 1,115,000 tons in 1945 to 7,300,000 tons in 1948. The goal in two years is set at 10,700,000 tons (compared with 16,000,000 tons in 1938). Thanks to the Ruhr, the entire industry of the Western zones is resuming its regular and precise movement.

The Ruhr has been a typical example of what the Germans call a *Verbundwirtschaft*—a trustified economic organization. Six gigantic vertical trusts—the Vereinigte Stahlwerke, Krupp, Mannesmann, Hoesch, Kloeckner, and Gutehoffnungshuette—each controlled their own mines, ovens, cokeries, and steel mills, and together dominated 90 per cent of the region's production. Two horizontal cartels—the Rheinisch-Westfalisches Kohlen Syndicat (RWKS) for the coal producers, and the Rohstahlgemeinschaft for the steel producers—bound the trusts together.

To break this potent industrial machine the Allies announced, immediately after Germany's capitulation, that they had agreed upon a whole series of steps. First of all, they foresaw the "decartelization" and "decentralization" of the *Konzern,* the vertical trusts as well as the horizontal cartels. Other agreements were to have paved the way for establishment of control over the management of these enterprises and the distribution of their products.

However, from the outset the Allies have been at fundamental cross-purposes. The French, intent upon depriving the Germans of their "potential for aggression," have insistently proposed the Ruhr's detachment from Western Germany and the creation of an "international regime" for this new "independent" region. None of the other occupying powers has accepted the French thesis. The British and Americans both regard an independent Ruhr as an "economic monstrosity," the creation of which would result in an impoverished rump-Germany, even should the country ever be unified. (The Russians, for their part, while donning the mantle of German unity, have announced their agreement in principle to an economic internationalization of the Ruhr—provided that they had the right of participation in present and future control bodies.)

In Ordinance No. 75 published at Frankfurt last November, the Anglo-American occupation authorities decided that the ultimate decision regarding ownership of the Ruhr industry would be left to a "freely elected German government." This horrified the French, who expressed their opposition to any return of these properties to the Germans, especially under the possible form of nationalization, because this might assure a unified direction of the whole Rhine-Westphalian industrial system—a prospect calculated to torment the sleep of the French General Staff. For its part, the British Labor party has affirmed that socialization of the Ruhr enterprises—or public ownership—would certainly prevent the

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repetition of past abuses. To further confound the confusion, the Americans support the conception of free enterprise: only last December the administration of the *Land* (province) of Hesse in the American zone received an order to "restore" to former owners coal mines and steel companies that had been made subject to a nationalization program.

More recently, a conference held last December at London reached a compromise extending the control system beyond the date of the "cessation of the occupation": at that time an International Authority for the Ruhr, supported by a Military Security Board, is to become the heir to the powers of control and supervision. The French accepted this most reluctantly and provisionally, while the Russians—unrepresented on any of the control boards—accepted it not at all.

IN THE meantime, to make the Ruhr factories "capable of operating on a responsible and efficient basis . . . and so that they may contribute to the restoration of European economy" (in the words of General Marshall), the British and Americans have issued a broad appeal to the former "management" cadres, and key posts in the new organization of these enterprises have been entrusted to them.

Many Europeans see in all this something more than a mere administrative decision in the interests of efficiency. Even so cautious and sober a newspaper as *Le Monde* (the New York *Times* of France) discerns the influence of American steel companies, who are reluctant to expand their present production capacity and who aim at eventual participation in German industry. Just how much truth there is in this, it is impossible to say, but it is significant that Europeans accept it as true. What is certain is that American and British Military Government are used to seeing businesses run by business men, regardless of their politics, and that the military mind is more likely to be ruled by habit than by political imagination. No matter how socialist the British government is, or how much Truman is committed to a "managed economy," British and American occupying authorities in Germany remain unmoved; the possibility of socialization and public control, being uncharted territory, is felt to be radically upsetting. As for the French, to them a *boche* is a *boche,* and the distinction between Nazi and non-Nazi is an idle refinement.

Whatever the motives behind the move (and the chances are that they are multifarious and perhaps even self-contradictory), German managers were charged with the task of "decartelization." As early as the beginning of 1946, the British placed at the head of the services handling the iron and steel industry (Treuhandverwaltung für die Eisen und Stahlindustrie) one Heinrich Dinkelbach, former director of the Vereinigte Stahlwerke of Duesseldorf and spokesman *since* 1935 for the steel cartel. Dinkelbach proceeded to create twenty-one independent enterprises whose directors and administrative councils he designated. By sheer coincidence, his own name can be found on a dozen of these councils.

This "decartelization" did not last very long. Despite its appeal as a vaguely "leftish" slogan, decartelization transgresses the facts of present-day industrial competitive existence, which demands administrative and technological rationalization. "To live in the competitive economy of the world," an American journalist in Germany has explained, "a plant needs more than just machines to produce. It needs a certain amount of guaranteed coal and ore deliveries at a price it can determine. Therefore a certain amount of such vertical integration must be allowed to the mills." The Communists, who insist upon the dissolution of the cartels in the Western zone, aim simply at economic anarchy from which they hope to reap a political profit; the most rigid and powerful German cartels are operated by the state in the Soviet zone. The only real question is: who shall govern the cartels? And in answering this question, American policy has made its greatest blunder. A cautious military hierarchy, fearful of irritating certain powerful conservative congressmen, and with its eye mainly focussed on forthcoming budget appropriations, has refused to take any step to encourage the democratic-socialist forces.

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The "decartelized"enterprises are being regrouped in eleven giant holdings whose management is to be entrusted, under Allied supervision, to German "trustees." It was proposed that among these trustees there should be included such personages as the abovementioned Dinkelbach; Werner Albert, former member of the managing board of Kronprinz A.G.; Karl Barich of the Westfaelisches Elektrizitaet A.G.; Guenther Henle, director of Kloeckner A.G.; Wilhelm Engel, director of the Hoesch *Konzern;* Guenther Sohl of the Vereinigte Stahlwerke—all of whom had these posts under the Nazis. As a result of trade-union and socialist pressure, this list was revised to include some so-called "technicians" and a few vague figures reputed to have had some connection with the trade-union movement. But Dinkelbach, Barich, and Henle remain the dominating members. There are other old acquaintances who have been appointed to important industrial posts: Alfred Hugenberg, minister in Hitler's first cabinet; Ernest Poensgen, Schwede, Rohland—all of the Vereinigte Stahlwerke, and the last-named a member of the SS and a confidante of Speer's; and so on *ad nauseam.*

THIS return of "managers" and "specialists" extends to other sectors of the economy. In the coal companies, Heinrich Kost, nominated by the British and confirmed by the American authorities as head of the direction of mines (Kohlenbergbauableitung), is the counterpart of Dinkelbach. A former director of the Rhein-Preussen Gewerkschaft, linked to the powerful Gutehoffnungshuette, Kost was one of the directors of the war economy. With him we find the slave-labor employer Rudyer Schmidt of the Harpner Bergbau, who had been spokesman for the coal cartel (RWKS). Wolf Witzleben, condemned by a denazification court, has resumed his management of the Siemens electrical trust, assisted by two war criminals, Johann Benkert and Bruno Pohlman. The lightly whitewashed Nazi, Helmuth Vits, has once more taken over directorship of the Vereinigte Glanzstoff factory, a leader in the rayon industry. Harold Rasch, a Mannesmann agent in territories that had been occupied by the Nazis; Alfred Petersen, of the Frankfurt Metall Gesellschaft; Rudolf Muller, director of chemical products at *Konzern* Roehm and Haas in Darmstadt; Gustav Harmssen, reactionary senator from Bremen who represents the Atlas Werke in the management of the Stinnes trust—all these gentlemen have constituted themselves into something known as the Wirtschaftspolitische Gesellschaft von 1947 (the 1947 Political Economy Club), whose purpose is to attempt to link the interests of German financiers and industrialists with those of their counterparts abroad.

In banking, not a single one of the directors of the six large German banks has been thoroughly investigated. An inquiry was opened up on the subject of the management of the expansionist Dresden and Deutsche banks. It was without effect. Herman Abs, director of the Deutsche Bank (the spinal column of Nazi imperialism's banking system), became financial adviser to the occupation authorities and is now, together with other "correct" Nazis, head of the banking system of the Ruhr and the Western zones. Robert Pferdmenges, an old-time Frankfurt banker, is himself on the central economic board of the Anglo-American zones—the Bizonal Economic Council—where he runs affairs in company with the above mentioned Guenther Henle of the Kloeckner Company.

Apparently, Germany's ruling circles are far from having lost "all." After a few spectacular demonstrations (at one time the British arrested seventy-six leading industrialists of the Ruhr), the economic and denazification trials ceased to strike seriously at the heads of Hitler's war economy. The spirit of "objectivity" which has presided over the purges; the "efficiency" that has been behind the recall to key posts of Nazi "technicians"; the freeing of the economy under their management—all this has meant for the greater number of these former Nazis an opportunity to reunite in a sort of occult fraternity, a unique "masonry."

THE psychological sub-soil in which this occult fraternity of Nazism can take root

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is fertile with anti-Semitism. Shortly after the liberation, one of the spokesmen for the newly organized Christian Democratic Union declared over Radio Berlin: "Of all the crimes of the Nazi regime, those committed against the German and foreign Jews is perhaps the most frightful. This is a great wrong to be expiated and righted. We want to say to our Jewish fellow-citizens that our doors are wide open to them and we hope they will place the millenary wisdom of their people at the service of . . . a better Germany. . . ."

These words have a melancholy, even mocking, ring today. The brutalization inculcated by a decade of Hitlerism, the return of Nazis to leading positions, the economic distress inherent in defeat and occupation, the slowness with which the displaced-persons camps have been emptied, have all contributed to a sharp renascence of anti-Semitism.

On August 30, 1947 the mutilated corpse of Miscka Czucker, one of the Jewish inmates of the Schlachtensee DP camp, was discovered at the gates of Berlin. This "1947 Jew murder," as the *Weltbuehne* called it, dramatically pointed to the poisoned atmosphere surrounding the displaced Jews who survived Hitler's massacres. Three years after the liberation, *Der Weg*, organ of the German Jewish community, reported that, up to last May, forty-one profanations of Jewish cemeteries had taken place in the British zone, twenty-eight in the American, four in the French, and four in the Russian. The Germans have not yet broken the thread of solidarity that binds them to the Hitler period—if anything, the privations of the last few years have had the reverse effect. Throughout Germany, and among all social classes, one can hear such expressions as: "*We* were at Stalingrad; *we* withdrew; *we* should have done this or that."

"O.d.F." (*Opfer des Faschismus*—victim of fascism) has become a form of insult. The DP's as a whole are considered the "scum of the earth," "center of the black market," a "fester upon the country's body," etc. Last July, at the time of the evacuation of DP's from Berlin, the *Taegliche Rundschau* (organ of the Russian Military Government) editorialized: "The DP's from Mariendorf and Schlachtensee camps are packing their bags. Everything they managed to sweep together out of the Berlin clearance-sale cannot be taken with them when the Dakotas fly them to the American occupation zone. To clean out the big DP camps, larger capacity machines are necessary than the useless air-bridge program will agree to. Five thousand DP's have been selected to bless the Western zone. Berlin will not say to them *auf Wiedersehen* since it has become only too well acquainted with these modern gypsies without any state who have renounced their fatherland because they prefer a forbidden life of speculation."

Of course, there are DP's who have participated in the black market; some of them, who passed through the hell of the Nazi camps and lost everything, harbor the conviction that German society, or anything appearing to take the place of it, owes them as substantial reparations as possible. But the real center of the black market lies in the top circles of industry and commerce, as well as, often enough, in certain branches of the occupation apparatus. Over a long period, for example, the Rasno Export—a Soviet export company—participated openly in cigarette trafficking, making use of DP's as its intermediaries with the German public.

The German Jewish community proper includes some 18,000 people out of the total of 600,000 who lived in Germany before the Nazis. The most important section, consisting of 7,800 people, is in Berlin. The second largest group is in Offenbach, near Frankfurt. Finally, about 1,400 Jews live in the Russian zone. This community has had to fall back upon itself, and is today isolated from that German society in which a large number of Jews had once thought themselves integrated. Its social composition is not complex: a small group of lawyers, doctors, dentists—particularly in Berlin; several hundred employed in the administrative apparatus, press, and radio of the Eastern zone; a large percentage of small businessmen (clothing, radio, furniture); and a group of manufacturers (principally in the leather industry) in Offenbach.

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In the field of politics, Jewish leadership is conspicuously absent—the only striking exception is Jeanette Wolf, a Berlin deputy and prominent in the Social Democratic party.

THE re-emergence of the former management cadres, the loosening of the ties upon industry, and the relative stabilization of finances brought about by the June 1948 monetary reform, have all led to a rapid crystallization of social relationships in Western Germany and to a sharper stratification of the population:

1. The foreground is once more occupied by bankers, managing directors, industrialists, while the traffickers, "chiselers," speculators, etc., who always grow powerful during periods of acute economic instability, are tending to lose their social weight.

2. The little businessmen, the marginal merchants, as well as the whole middle-class layer of lawyers, notaries, teachers, etc., are resuming their traditional places after a purging that affected them only slightly. The little bureaucrat—former Nazi party member—is back in circulation and even advancing in the administrative hierarchy.*

3. The peasants, economically strengthened during the inflationary period, are much more important than in prewar days.

4. The factory workers, who suffered the most from the disruption of normal relations between city and countryside, seem to have emerged from their long night of apathy and prostration. The trade-union movement is active and quite bold in its demands, though it is handicapped by lack of sympathy on the part of the occupying authorities. (Witness the recent dismissal of Charles La Follette—who was an exception—from his position as governor of Wuerttemberg-Baden.)

5. Refugees from the East, consisting of a mass of several million persons, have suffered horribly. Large numbers perished, while the balance constitutes an enormous contingent of declassed and uprooted elements.

Nationalist, chauvinist, anti-Semitic sentiments have yet to be incarnated in a definitive political organization. Because of the military occupation, the top circles of the hierarchy in industry and in the *Laender* apparatus tend not to assert themselves in political life: for their purposes, the political parties are too submissive to the occupier, or are entirely ineffective whenever they embark upon a real opposition. This basic fact of political life in Western Germany also acts to drive large sectors of the population away from the political arena, and transforms the big political parties into superstructures without genuinely deep roots.

The Social Democratic party, dominant particularly in Berlin and the British zone; the Christian Democratic Union and the liberals who are in the forefront in the two other zones—all function in a rarefied atmosphere above the really significant social trends. Despite their yielding to the temptation to outbid one another in nationalism—as does the so-called Socialist Unity party of the Eastern zone—their weakness can be measured by the fact that they have not broken up the Nazi "masonic" grouping, the reality of which nobody questions.

The recent Social Democratic electoral victory in Berlin does not weaken this thesis. It only emphasizes how certain tests, under conditions of occupation, can achieve results which falsify the reality: almost certainly the majority was given to the Social Democratic party because of its anti-Russian, rather than its pro-socialist, complexion.

Among the thirty political formations now existing in the various zones, there is the League for Germany's Rebirth, formed in the state of Hesse, which claims as its leader Otto Strasser; from his Canadian exile, Strasser informs us that a third World War "costing Germany some five to ten million dead" is the only way to make a "powerful nation" out of Germany again. Similar organizations, such as the National Democratic party, the Conservative German party, the Bavarian Anti-Communist party, and the German

*A recent philological development, noted by the Berlin *Sozialdemokrat*, is revealing on this score. The latest edition of the standard Brockhaus encyclopedia defines a Nazi as follows: "Diminutive of Ignaz, itself an abbreviation of Ignatius." The *Sozialdemokrat* commented: "Even the Brockhaus has been ig-nazified!"

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party of the British zone led by the racist Reinhold Wulle, represent only tentative attempts to polarize reactionary nationalist sentiment, rather than pressing dangers. German politics can have no substantial meaning so long as the occupation continues. At that future date when the occupying armies leave, it will be seen that the present political activity is only a froth on the surface of a political sea whose depths have yet to be sounded.

THERE has been some progress in the direction of "federal unification" of the three Western zones (most of it on paper and of uncertain significance).* But the Allies still differ considerably on the speed and extent of Germany's ultimate reconstruction. The Americans approach this problem from the standpoints of military security and the economic costs of throttling German productivity. The British are very sensitive to the effect on their foreign-trade program of a large-scale resumption of German exports, but they also have to face up to the annual deficit of their zone. The French are obsessed with the need for security against another German invasion, and are also conscious of the competition which exists between French and German economies. Moreover, the French zone has practically no deficit for the simple reason that, whatever the situation of the Germans, the French do not permit the books to get out of balance.

Since last year, the Marshall Plan has drawn together the three Western German zones, comprising 64 per cent of the population and 70 per cent of the territory of Potsdam Germany—that is, Germany without the areas ceded to Poland. However, in both the bizonal system (which has unified the Anglo-American zones since 1947) and in the projected Trizonia, the bulk of imports has been and will be paid for principally by advances from American funds. It is obviously not sensible, especially from the American point of view, to continue industrial dismantlement to meet reparations demands on the one hand and on the other to pay out of the American taxpayer's pocket for imports necessary to feed the Germans. Three different British and American positions, all leading to a single conclusion, have resulted from this dilemma:

In March 1946, under pressure of the Western Powers, the Allied Control Council decided that the capacity of Germany industry should be fixed at 75 per cent of its 1936 capacity (50 to 55 per cent of its 1938 capacity). Dismantlements by each of the occupation authorities were to cease; a Reparations Agency was created and authorized to dismantle 2000 enterprises considered as surplus.

In May 1947, Generals Lucius D. Clay and Sir Brian Robertson, heads of the American and British occupation forces respectively, decided to suspend dismantlements. Some months later, they decided that Germany's productive capacity had to be "equal to or above the 1936 capacity if the country was to survive." The number of factories to be torn down in Bizonia was reduced to 682.

In January 1949, the Humphrey Committee—consisting of five industrialists headed by George M. Humphrey of Cleveland—decided to preserve 150 factories out of these 682 (of which 400 had already either been taken apart or inventoried by the Reparations Agency) so as to allow a further growth in German steel production.

The French have been acutely displeased by this "softening" attitude. (One may note in passing that the French Communists demand massive reparations from the Germans, while the German Communists denounce the "pillaging" undertaken by the Allies "in the guise of reparations.") According to a French memorandum, out of 1,300,000 machines found in the Western zones, "600,000 could normally be allotted to reparations"; almost all of these machines are located outside the French zone. Just how the economy of Bizonia—with its swollen population and agricultural deficiency—could become self-supporting, no one in France has explained.

* For several months, sixty-five delegates from the three Western zones, meeting at Bonn, have busied themselves with drawing up a German constitution which will supposedly harmonize the American-French ideal of (German) federalism and the German ideal of unity.

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The reality is that the "deconstruction" of German industry has come to an end in the Western zones. The problem still to be finally resolved is what the structure and political pattern of industrial Germany is to be.

CONFRONTING this Trizonia, now looking for a formal definition of itself in a Constitution and a Statute of Occupation, there is the Russian zone, functioning as an entity entrenched and separated from the rest of Germany. No other zone has been so integrated into a foreign economic system. This integration occurred in three stages: (1) 1945-1946—extensive industrial dismantling and removals of all kinds throughout the zone; (2) 1946-1947—development of Soviet industrial and commercial companies (*Sowjetische Aktiengesellschaften*); (3) 1948—planned production, according to the needs of the Soviet sphere. The former economic and social framework of the Russian zone has been destroyed and a new one erected which is amenable to Russian control.

Junker property ownership was liquidated by the agrarian reform launched at the start of the occupation, and estates amounting to 2,700,000 hectares were distributed to 320,000 families. Thus the new regime established a rather broad political base in the countryside—before an intensive control was instituted over these small property owners, with the help of newly established centers of agricultural machinery which preempted all the zone's available farm equipment.

A banking reform suppressed the old banking system and created five regional banks and a Central German Bank whose capital of one hundred million marks was furnished by the regional banks and central zonal administration. The entire banking system is thus in the hands of the occupier.

Industrial reform was launched during the same period that the Russians began an extensive removal of factories, transport equipment, etc. To allow a resumption of production, three types of ownership were instituted for the industries remaining in the zone: (1) artisanal and small industrial properties were left as a "private sector," in the hands of small owners; (2) average-sized properties that were either unremovable or of secondary interest to the Russians were placed in the "people's sector" (nationalized property); (3) large properties, decreed to be war booty or designated as "reparations," were seized as the "definitive property" of the Russian administration. By this last act, some one hundred and thirty monopolistic, giant companies, organized into "joint-stock companies" (*Sowjetische Aktiengesellschaften*), have centralized in Russian hands the zonal production of steel, cement, chemicals, cigarettes, leather, textiles, etc., and have been, in effect, economically walled off from the zone itself. Their production goes to Russia, free of charge. Only the theoretical value of the enterprise is listed as part of reparations.

THE most important lever of Russian control, aside from the Soviet Military Administration, has been the German Socialist-Communist Unity party (SED) which controls a network of trade union, cooperative, peasant, women, and youth organizations.

The central core of the SED consists of a nucleus of Communist "die-hards," including German Communists brought to Russia and assimilated by the Russian ruling group (Wilhelm Pieck, Walter Ulbricht, etc.), and Communists from the concentration camps or the emigration who carried out confidential tasks during the period of illegality. Under Russian supervision, this central core guides the zone's political, social, and administrative life. Just below this core there is a layer of former and new party members, tied to the party by their place in the new social structure—directors of administrative services, managers of nationalized enterprises (about 350,000), trade union bosses, management committees, and others. Recruitment of members to this group is a rather complex affair. Some come from former groups of managers, or from the party's rank and file, or from ex-officers of the German army, trained in Russia. Finally, the base of this pyramid is formed by a much more extensive recruitment which forces practically every

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worker or employe to belong to one of the "mass organizations" controlled by the SED.

The opposition has been totally mastered. "Bourgeois" parties—Liberal-Democratic party, Christian Democratic Union, National Democratic party (better known as "the party of the little Nazis")—are all weak and have ever less freedom of movement; they serve only to camouflage Russian control as it is exercised through the SED.

The "party of the little Nazis" is one of the most curious organizations the Communists have ever conceived of. The "idea" was launched in April of last year by a newspaper created *ad hoc*, the *National Zeitung*, which, in a typical Nazi style borrowed for the occasion, proposed the creation of "a new party, radically anti-capitalist and bringing together people of truly German beliefs." This paper, becoming aware that such a suggestion "might *seem* to be suspicious," expressly added: "It is remarkable that it is principally the little Nazis who want a new party. . . . But an attentive reading of our readers' letters indicates that none of them thinks of reviving the National Socialist party. . . ." Two weeks later, two committees formed at Halle and Erfurt sought the legalization of the new party. However, its all too official character prevents it from taking root and exercising its assigned role—namely, to be a controlled safety valve for the mass of former Nazis.

THE Eastern zone's political machine is thus quite complex, despite the well-known rigidity of its remarkably centralized leadership. To this widespread political apparatus and the new industrial bureaucracy, the administrative bureaucracy and the police must be added. According to evidence difficult to verify, the new police force consists of some three hundred thousand men, with Marshal von Paulus' captured Stalingrad army providing most of its top cadres. Before being permitted to serve in this police force, former officers and Nazi soldiers underwent intensive training in prisoner-of-war camps.

Social stratification in that part of Germany dominated by the SED—*Sedistan*, the Germans ironically call it—is entirely different from that in the Western zones:

1. The extensive and multiform political, industrial, and administrative apparatus derives from all the former social layers of the region. According to statistics dealing with administrative leaders, their composition is as follows: 5 per cent were formerly capitalist managers; 32 per cent were businessmen; 24 per cent were engineers; 12 per cent were employes; 27 per cent were workers.

2. The majority of former industrialists and land owners have fled the country. On the eve of Germany's capitulation, thousands of enterprises were abandoned. Nationalization has appreciably contracted the operating sphere of private capital. Middle-class enterprises are now in process of liquidation also, because of the extension of state commerce, strict control over the artisan, etc.

3. Workers and technicians are extremely differentiated. Thanks to the system characteristic of all countries within the Soviet sphere, ranges in salaries are very great. At the base, wages are very low. But a whole series of bonuses, in cash or food products (grains, eggs, fat, sugar, etc.), which vary according to the hierarchical scale, radically modifies the over-all value of wages. These bonuses vary from one to ten or even fifteen times the base wage scale.

4. A redistribution of social wealth is now taking place throughout the countryside. After permitting a brief development of the more well-to-do peasantry, leadership in the villages is passing into the hands of state-controlled cooperatives.

The Russian zone, then, organizationally and structurally presents the same characteristics as a number of the "popular democracies"—notably Rumania and Hungary, both former "enemy" lands where Russia has assured itself of permanent economic control. The SED's political objective still remains the domination of all of Germany—not merely the Eastern zone. But the obstacle it inevitably comes up against is that economic exploitation combined with political repression has made the Russian occupier equally detested in all zones.

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THE former allies who today face one another at Berlin could not have known what the stakes were at the Potsdam Conference. Denazification, demilitarization, democratization, etc., when translated into day-to-day life—not as functions of general principles, but in the interests of the now hostile occupiers—have yielded results that were partly unforeseeable three years ago. The return of Nazi "technicians" to leading posts in the West; the transformation of the Eastern zone into an oriental type of satrapy directed from Moscow; the more or less relative "demilitarization" of industry, with the accompanying concentration of the military forces of four powers at Europe's center; the majority rule of political parties, with the indisputable fact that all this remains only superstructural and has not taken hold of the country's psychology—these characteristics of the new Germanies have made more problematic than ever the country's reintegration into a peaceful Europe.

The "struggle for Berlin" has strikingly illustrated the centrifugal force which the rump Germanies have generated. For the Russians, seizure of the Berlin enclave meant placing themselves in the best possible position for demanding that their handpicked politicians be first in line for the succession to all of Germany; it was, besides, the surest way of double-locking a door opening on their rigid, centralized system in Eastern Europe. (There was also the not quite negligible factor of Berlin's intrinsic value—the contribution of this city to Germany's national revenue before the war was equal to that of all German territories now ceded to Poland.) For the Allies, holding fast at Berlin meant tracing a limit to Russian expansionism. From *both* sides, the problem seems to be one of deciding the *most favorable dismemberment of the country,* rather than any theoretical "reunification." The Communists and extreme nationalists may shriek for "unity," but no one wants unity except on his own terms.

The vaster problem of a peace treaty with Germany has become even more insoluble than any agreement over Berlin. Since the Eastern zone has an ironclad political and police apparatus, the Russian troops could easily be withdrawn. Such a Russian gesture, though actually meaningless, would make excellent propaganda. In the West, on the other hand, an Allied withdrawal would completely change the face of European politics; it would not only lead to the loss of Western Germany, but would mean the collapse of Western Europe's military security organization. Indeed, such is the imbalance between the Eastern bloc's strength, directed by Russia, and that of Western Europe, that only the division of Germany and the presence of American troops maintain the equilibrium.

Could the appearance of a German democracy with a broad popular base lead to the construction of a Western Germany which would really rely upon its own strength? It would seem to be very late for such an event—the existing gap between the political superstructure and the economic infra-structure dominated by ex-Nazis inhibits it. But it is true that some elements of the German population constitute a soil favorable to the growth of genuine democratic conceptions. In the broad mass of the Social Democratic party and particularly in its youth section (Sozialistische Jugend), for example, are found many people who are searching for new roads. In the universities, among the student youth and the young intellectuals, one finds an absolute opposition to both a revival of neo-Nazism and any turning toward Russian-style "socialism." Such tendencies toward independent thought and action meet with the smallest degree of encouragement from all sides. The occupying authorities conspicuously ignore democratic-minded trade unionists, technologists, and intellectuals when appointments to important posts are made; there is still the bizarre myth that having been a member of a board of directors of a business in Nazi Germany is *prima facie* evidence of indispensable technical skill. Yet it is this embryonic democratic impulse which represents the only hope for this scarred mass of seventy million people—if only the Allied occupation authorities can be persuaded to act more as midwives and less as abortionists.

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THE YESHIVA COMES TO WESTCHESTER

The Legalistic Hedges of Suburbia

HERRYMON MAURER

IT WOULD be easy to tell this story of the confrontation of the Yeshiva of Nitra and a top-drawer Westchester County township in the light irony of the current British film comedies of suburbia, beginning with the first outraged glance of the plump matron spying, as she descended from her station wagon, the ear-locked, wide-hatted rabbi in front of the village A&P, and going on to the outrage of her liberal-minded young niece at auntie's outrage, and the meeting of the town fathers, and the rest. . . .

But—and not only to one observer—the actual events write themselves in a more serious key. Almost from the beginning there were citizens who sensed that there was a deeper drama here, that being played out in the gentle, landscaped hills and the genteel drawing rooms of Mount Kisco and Chappaqua was the struggle of a saintly man and his small band of followers, survivors of the concentration camps and the menace of the gas chamber, to achieve that refuge and that freedom that earlier settlers had come to seek—and to find—in that very spot some two hundred years ago.

SO THIS is a sober account of a man who has seen and felt the evil, the hatreds, and the horrors that erased religion, family, friends, work—everything but hope—a man who yet smiles with a serenity, a brilliance, and a strength that are set in the very form of his eyes, the planes of his face, the slant of his back. It is an account also of a rich and responsible American township, dedicated to that sort of well-appearing country life that involves, variously, property values and human rights, the tax rate and the state of the world, good neighbors and good schools, rural pleasures and city sophistication. It is particularly an account of the meeting of that man, in the form of a two-thousand-year tradition of religious community, and of that township, in the form of a zoning-preserve newly established by law to protect the look of the place and the worth of it. The meeting could have been a collision, and it can still be one, for it involves problems ranging from the starting of a new religious community in the face of American legal involution to the right or wrong of refugees establishing a tax-exempt institution in a high-tax town. But the meeting has not yet become a collision, and it is unlikely to become one. It would seem that the smile has been more effective than the legalism.

First, the man. A Hebrew scholar whose work lies particularly in Masoretic research and in Talmudic studies, Rabbi Michael Weissmandl was a graduate of the Yeshiva of Nitra, Czechoslovakia, student at Oxford's Bodleian Library, and amateur of physical science. He served as Dean of the Nitra Yeshiva until its roots and its members—four hundred young men—were torn apart by

FROM the wreckage of Eastern Europe, with little intact but a two-thousand-year-old tradition, the Yeshiva of Nitra came to America. Settling finally in the wealthy suburban township of New Castle in Westchester County, New York, its rabbi and group of seventy-five students were quickly caught in the crosscurrents of a legalistic struggle, which townspeople—Jew and Christian alike—soon realized reflected a deeper conflict over the nature of the values that a proper American community should be concerned to safeguard. HERRYMON MAURER will be remembered as the author of the satirical essay "A Practical Scheme to Settle the DP's," published in the August 1948 COMMENTARY. Mr. Maurer, a resident of New Castle, is a regular contributor to, and a former senior editor of, *Fortune* magazine: his book on Gandhi, *Great Soul,* was published this fall by Doubleday. He was born in Sewickley, Pennsylvania, in 1914.

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Nazis. His work then became the saving of life. Earlier he had consulted with the Archbishop of Canterbury on British refuge for Jews from the continent. Now he undertook such schemes as a Canada settlement plan, which was ruined by the spread of war, and a complicated fifty-thousand-dollars bribery-ransom arrangement which preserved some thirty thousand Jews in Slovakia. Thereafter he kept underground, smuggling Jews out of Europe, although he was unable to save his wife and children. Finally captured, he was put into a concentration camp, and shipped off to the gas chambers by cattle car, whence he escaped by crawling through a ventilator while the train was moving at top speed.

During this period, what might be called an inspiration, a dream, a hope—there are no right words for it—developed within him. "We must take the broken," he said, "and open a new world for him." During the year after the war he lay exhausted and sick in Switzerland. He kept saying, "We must not prove right the enemy who believed we were destroyed."

Out of the camps and the rubble of Central Europe he drew together at the end of the war the remnant of the Nitra Yeshiva's original four hundred—seventy-five young men, aged mostly in their teens. They were orphaned, branded, and very deeply shaken. They clung to him as a savior and followed him almost as disciples. For these young men, the new world clearly could not be Europe. European Jewry was itself broken, fatally broken, and broken with it was the whole fabric of Orthodoxy. Of all the Yeshivas, all the Orthodox religious schools, only three or four came out of the war. Furthermore, the torture rack of anti-Semitism was broken not at all, so that there was only a past for Judaism in Europe and not any present or future. Rabbi Weissmandl said, "There is an obligation on the few who are left. We must come to America to build anew our religion." He felt that a religious community must break the 20th-century habit of "experimenting endlessly to find out what two and two is *not*. For ten years two and two was Hitler. I have a demand of God, if he has given me hands to work with and eyes to see, that he show me the Truth. We must find out what two and two is *yes*."

It was in America that Rabbi Weissmandl wished to say *yes*. A man of Orthodox persuasion, he did not choose Palestine. His plan was to build anew a timeless religion, not to let himself and his students be caught up in a new nationalism, however admirable. His aim was not simply to find a haven for persecuted men; it was to establish and build a school of religion in America. He had not even any wish to see his graduates find posts some day in prosperous and influential temples. The hard kernel of his plan was much more inspired and much more real: he would take the young men and train them, not alone in the beliefs and practices of faith, but also in the skills and practices of agriculture and trade. Some, for instance, he would make into printers, for there were manuscripts, ancient and unpublished, that had somehow been rescued from Europe ("We did not save them; God did") and their publication was a pressing duty. Men of their own mind and purse, the graduates would be answerable to no person, no congregation, for their teaching or their livelihood. Unfettered, they could in fact build anew. They could act as the modern counterparts of the unknown rabbi, ransomed from kidnappers by untaught Jews in Marseille, who became the teacher of Rabbi Gershom, Light of the Exile and founder of Ashkenazic Judaism.

In the last days of 1946, aided by older graduates of the Yeshiva already in America, the group of seventy-five arrived in New York and took up residence in a dilapidated house in Somerville, New Jersey. As a permanent location for a religious community, the house itself was unsuitable. Besides, rocks were thrown through windows and shotguns discharged through the front door, and there was great alarm among the young men, whose remembered experience was largely of concentration camps. Search consequently was begun for a property suitably secluded and rural, not too far from Orthodox groups

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in New York. The search continued eight months; three hundred places were brought to the Yeshiva's attention; Rabbi Weissmandl himself looked at fifty. "We are searching," he said, "for a shelter for the Jewish faith as we see it."

The shelter that at length presented itself was the old Brewster estate in the township of New Castle, some forty miles north of New York. It consisted of more than two hundred acres, an immense main house of chateau-stucco style and a number of outbuildings. Eighty per cent of the land was wooded; the rest was marginal but some of it was suitable for farm training. As for the buildings, they were so far from the road that they were difficult to find, let alone see, and the nearest neighboring houses were half a mile away from the edge of the property line itself. To the north, east, and west lay heavily wooded City of New York lands surrounding Croton Lake and Kisco River; over the hill to the south was another large property. The views were impressive; the seclusion complete. Finally, the estate had been begging for buyers for seven years; the township officials had sliced taxes down to $3983.33, but no buyers had been attracted: there were forty-four rooms in the main house and thirty in the outbuildings. The price was $100,000. Alumni of the Yeshiva managed $15,000 of it. Israel Rogosin, a New York businessman interested in the Yeshiva by Dr. Leo Jung of the Jewish Center and Dr. Alvin Johnson of the New School for Social Research, gave the remaining $85,000 in the form of an interest-free mortgage. The New York attorney for the Yeshiva assured Rabbi Weissmandl that his community would have no problems of zoning restriction: monastic groups, he indicated, are not subject to the limitations put upon multiple dwellings.

In company with eleven new students from New York, the Yeshiva moved into this retreat and settled down to prayer, work, and rest. Rabbi Weissmandl and his assistant teachers continued religious instruction in the informal European manner, whereby learning was treated as a live thing, sought by teachers and students alike, and not a rigid thing handed down by rule from above. The studies were taxing: Bible, Prophets, Talmud and Talmudic law, religious philosophy, Jewish history, manuscript research, and Hebrew. The students responded with enthusiasm. Before long the Brewster estate was alive: alive at times with quiet concentration, alive often with intense argument on Talmudic interpretation, alive with the sounds, jumbled and vibrant, of young men singing into their minds the studies in which for them two and two makes yes.

As for general teaching, Maurice A. Brandt, a retired New York school principal caught up by the Yeshiva idea, volunteered to train the young men in the normal New York grade and high-school curriculum with the aim of fitting graduates for small-town and city life in the United States. The young men were held together and held to their teachers by an active group life. They were not bothered by the sparse furnishings of their new home; they were comfortable with little, for they had known far less. In concentration camp, many of them had slept on the floor to avoid the ire of jailors who made measuring-rod inspections of beds. They were intense alike in devotions and in work; their hunger for growth and for learning stirred sharp powers of concentration.

Rest, however, was an immediate essential. "We are like men," said Rabbi Weissmandl, "who have dropped from the tenth floor. After ten months we go on crutches three steps in an hour." The European students were nervous on trains. When a police car entered the grounds on a friendly errand, fifty of them took off to hide in the woods: police, in their experience, were men who kill families. Hungry for sympathy, they were inwardly rent by words such as mother and father, and the teachers had to be careful to avoid opening wounds difficult to heal.

But there was not yet to be rest. There were the financial problems of making a fresh start, and the Yeshiva went into debt to local tradespeople, from which they had to be rescued by the contributions of a number of

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local Jews. There were legal matters involving corporate charters. There were protests from the county Board of Health over delays in meeting water and sewage requirements. And at length there were letters from the Building Inspector of the Town of New Castle mentioning court action and quoting the Zoning Ordinance, which limits most of the township residence area to one-family houses, but permits "a private school if approved by the Board of Appeals." After much thought and some delay, the Yeshiva decided not to make an issue of its monastic character, appealed to the Zoning Board, sent the proper notices to the newspapers, and retained a Westchester attorney. The Board set Tuesday evening September 7 for a hearing, and Rabbi Weissmandl went to it confident that there would be no opposition, no troubles, simply formalities.

Thereupon the storm broke. Of the New Castle taxpayers that crowded into the town offices, a majority were opposed to the presence of the Yeshiva altogether. After an explanation had been given of its programs and aims, a real-estate man declared, "They come bringing their ghetto with them and establish it in the heart of aristocratic Westchester." This sentiment was greeted with applause. Other residents spoke darkly of increased tax burdens and decreased property values. Finally the Board adjourned the hearing for one month and scheduled it for the high-school gymnasium, the largest hall in the town.

What motives were at the root of this sudden opposition? No one at any time admitted publicly to any feeling of anti-Semitism. The man indignant about the "ghetto" said flatly, "I am not anti-Semitic." Another man insisted in a letter to the Zoning Board that "A permanent refugee settlement *of any race or creed* in a top residential community like this will not only depreciate real estate values, but in the case of acreage like ours adjoining or near the Brewster estate will make it unmarketable." In private conversation still another man remarked, "I have many Jewish friends, some of whom are my very best friends, but you must understand that this is a very wealthy cultured community that likes to be friendly with its neighbors. They have our sympathy, but how can we be close to them?" Certain Jews, furthermore, seem to have found themselves somewhat embarrassed by the presence in New Castle of men whose Orthodox hats and side curls were combined with poverty and broken English, and objectors to the Yeshiva pointed to them as proof of the purity of their own motives.

THE township of New Castle contains part of the village of Mount Kisco and the unincorporated hamlet of Chappaqua. The area, as it happens, was settled originally by Quaker farmers whose ancestors had moved into Westchester to escape persecution on Long Island and to ensure tolerance for themselves and for others: two-hundred-odd years ago the Purchase Friends Meeting dispatched two of their members on horseback to Philadelphia to bring back a Catholic priest to serve the religious needs of refugees shipwrecked in Long Island Sound. Now there are not many Quakers and not many farmers left. Apart from a relatively small population of workingmen and shopkeepers, concentrated largely in the village of Mount Kisco, the township is populated by persons successful in business and the professions who came out from New York seeking to combine a comfortable house and a greater or smaller plot of land in a sort of American version of English self-contained country-house life. In general the commuters read the *Tribune* and the *Times*, pay attention to good books, and are at pains to think the right thoughts. They have their own circle of friends, with whom they are close, but do not make up a community—the resident Jews are not a community either—but rather a collection of separate entities that have in common a place of residence. Any anti-Semitism that exists among adults has in the past been expressed—and then most infrequently—only through such actions of children as baiting Jewish storekeepers and soaping swastikas on windows. Even these actions, probably, reflect social rather than racial prejudice: Jews of means or position are in many quarters not unwelcome.

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Of this sophisticated group of people, the objectors to the Yeshiva argued somewhat as follows:

The newcomers are a peculiar and different people and they will not be at home in Westchester.

The more that tax-exempt institutions come into New Castle, the more is the burden of taxes increased. There are already several such institutions—a children's convalescent home and a Catholic convent—that came in before there were any zoning ordinances. The function of the ordinances is to prevent an increase in their number.

The beauty of Northern Westchester is its unspoiled countryside. The face of it must not be changed or altered.

The Brewster property would lend itself admirably to a high-class building development.

A charitable institution is a threat to the values of all adjoining property.

The newcomers have been ill-advised; the land really is not suitable for farming; the school will be much better off somewhere else.

In addition to these arguments there were a variety of comments that reflected rumor and misinformation: the Yeshiva had come in under false pretenses with the thought that once they established themselves on the property they would not be sent off it; the Yeshiva did not have funds or backing and still had not paid off its debts; the Yeshiva planned to bring all sorts and numbers of friends of theirs out from New York and operate like a hotel; the Yeshiva left garbage scattered all over the property; the Yeshiva was trying to get away with something and what was it? Did they want to overthrow the government? And so on. Certain residents seemed troubled that the ghosts of Europe had come to haunt them; it was as if they had to keep themselves inwardly busy assuaging twinges of guilt with assurances that there was no guilt at all.

Other residents of the community, many of whom had become aware of the Yeshiva only when opposition appeared against it, came with varying degrees of heat to its defense. The two local newspapers featured detailed news stories and wrote editorials of support; the majority of the clergy made statements from the pulpit, and several saw fit to warn their congregations against anti-Semitism. Several owners of property near the Yeshiva announced they had no fears as to their investment. A very considerable number of residents, by no means a minority, saw no reason why any religious group could not go wherever it wanted to. A smaller group girded warmly for battle. Attention was called to the suffering members of the Yeshiva had already undergone, and emphasis was put on the very great danger of demolishing the American heritage of religious freedom. Northern Westchester soon found itself in considerable turmoil.

At this juncture Rabbi Weissmandl issued a public statement. "Motivated," he wrote, "by extraordinary circumstances I feel it necessary to tell our neighbors something about ourselves." He mentioned briefly experiences in Europe, and he wrote further, "Our only aim has been to search for the ways of God in this shaky civilization. . . . In hours of hopeless despair a door has been opened for us in this country which we have always dreamed of as the country of Liberty, Tolerance, and Justice for all who have suffered. We have brought with us the unshakable belief in God and the anxiety to seek for the truth. We know that with these ideas we are not strangers in this country. . . . We are tired people. What we want is to live our way of life and to be understood by our neighbors. We sincerely hope that the friendly people of Westchester County will overlook the superficial forms of outer appearance and look deeper into our hearts and minds."

MEANWHILE the American Jewish Committee labored quietly and continually, counseling the Yeshiva and quieting the more vocal opposition throughout the township. So did the National Conference of Christians and Jews. So did individuals, some of whom were not Jewish and some of whom were Jews who were not Orthodox. And the

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opposition became less heated. The October 7 hearing of the Zoning Board of Appeals was postponed two weeks, and a group of objectors and a group of Jewish supporters came together to try to work out a compromise. It was suggested to the objectors that if Rabbi Weissmandl were willing, an attempt could be made to find other quarters, but that if the Rabbi chose to remain, he should be supported in his right to locate the Yeshiva wherever he wanted. The compromise did not succeed, but the mood of the argument became considerably more tranquil. Twenty-nine objectors issued a resolution through their lawyer saying that "It may be necessary temporarily[!] to subordinate property rights to human rights. . . ." They urged that the appeal of the Yeshiva be denied but that time be given to find another place.

On October 21, the Zoning Board met again; the school gymnasium was crowded; support for the Yeshiva was more evident than opposition, expressed only through the lawyer for the objectors. Now the Board took up its own questioning. Were some of the students and the rabbis married? What farming use would the land be put to? Were the students learning the English language? What were the regulations? The requirements for admissions? The curriculum? Did the Yeshiva teach social studies, science? Were the classrooms different from the sleeping quarters? Were there blackboards in the classrooms? What were the qualifications of the teachers? What about guarantees of finances? Was the school truck insured? How many graduates a year? How large a student body? Was there any rabbinical body that set the course of study and prescribed the rules for all seminaries?

Rabbi Weissmandl apologized for his English and answered carefully, patiently. "We are a rabbinical seminary," he explained, "combined with a monastery-like institution for post-graduates. That and no more."

The Board quizzed him at length on matters of laws, ordinances, and incorporations. "I am not a lawyer," he said quietly, "to tell you all this."

As the Rabbi sat to give testimony, it was evident that there were two ways of looking at him. One could see a man who talked and thought with great clarity, a man who remained calm, patient, and not without humor in the face alike of adversity and nuisance. Above all one could see a man very much at home in the world and at the same time not at all of the world, a man of depth and of wisdom who had come to such grips with the problems of a faith tormented by the Nazis that he had conceived a great dream.

But the law, it seemed, could not see these things. It could not inquire into the two chief facts of the Yeshiva, namely, an impressive man and an impressive idea. It could only prod at the man and at the idea with the aim of eliciting small facts. Legally it appeared necessary to make certain that the Yeshiva was a school, properly incorporated, suitably run. Viewed as a witness to the trivia so inevitable in legal proceedings, Rabbi Weissmandl indeed looked very European, not a little strange—by no means convincing as the proper brisk professional executive of a proper American school.

DURING the next three weeks the Board of Zoning Appeals sequestered itself for investigation and deliberation. The Board visited the school; the County Board of Health visited; so did an educational expert and a fire expert. On November 16 the Board produced a thirteen-page decision, very formal and very legalistic.

Of this document it can be said that it was neither hot nor cold but lukewarm. The operation of a rabbinical seminary was approved, but the approval was hedged in a bewildering variety of ways. There were never to be more than one hundred and fifty persons on the property; only forty acres of the property were to be used; the rehabilitation of DP's and refugees was not to be undertaken; there were to be such fire doors, alarms, and escapes as a fire-chief's plan prescribed; sewage was to be adequately and sanitarily disposed of; teaching of trades was forbidden, although limited farm uses were permitted; there could be no more than a set number of cows and chickens; the toilet fa-

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cilities were to be of such and such number; the water was to be of such and such quantity; each bed was to be open at the bottom and the sides and have two feet of space beside it; milk was to be boiled, restaurant permits secured, physicians called in accordance with set rules; and everything was to be subject to the regulations of this and the inspection of that. Furthermore, the staff was to "proceed as rapidly as possible to make English the secular language of instruction and to convert its teaching instruction to standard American-Jewish pedagogy," and its progress in these matters was to be certified "by such Jewish educational authority as may be acceptable to the Board." None of these multifarious provisions were left to the ordinary processes of Departments of Health and Education. The residence of the Yeshiva was made dependent for all time on a continued observance of rules, the breaking of which could, after due hearing, "constitute ground for summary revocation" of the permit.

Now if the Yeshiva—or, to use the language of the decision, "this Orthodox Talmudic Rabbinical School, in its first stages of development, using European methods of group instruction"—be viewed in terms of its two-thousand-year-old tradition (a tradition, incidentally, to which the Christian religion owes a great debt for purity of faith, for witness to the oneness of God and to the fullness and richness of his creation), if it be viewed in these terms and if the legalism of a well-to-do Westchester township be viewed alongside it, the decision seems, of course, grotesque, morally and esthetically. And surely it is offensive alike to a great Jewish tradition of religious teaching and to a great American tradition of free refuge, free conscience, free settlement.

The decision, for instance, states a wish to protect property. What ravages will a religious community make upon property? It is wished also "to secure safety from fire, panic, and other dangers." What fires will be started by men from concentration camps living in a practically fireproof building? What panics will be touched off by one hundred fifty students of religion living in the middle of some two hundred-odd acres? It is wished "to promote health and the general welfare." What dangers to township health are likely to arise in a secluded location hedged by trees? Will the general welfare be troubled by men at prayer? Grotesque, grotesque, grotesque.

Seen, however, in terms of the accepted legalisms of our times, the decision is not grotesque. As a matter of fact, it is in large part a recapitulation of various state and county regulations ordained for institutions of various sorts. Certain parts of the decision, indeed, ordered the Yeshiva to do what it was already doing. There were already plenty of toilets, for instance, and English was already the language of secular instruction. The fire-prevention requirements found their way in because the property lies outside of any established fire districts. Water and sewage requirements were simply everyday Department of Health rules; they were introduced into the decision largely because the Department, having lost patience over the carrying out of its earlier orders, wished to pass the buck of enforcement. Furthermore, the Zoning Board was genuinely concerned for the welfare not simply of the public at large, but for that part of the public in the Yeshiva itself—a concern, incidentally, that would undoubtedly have the sanction of the courts.

In the prevailing scheme of values, few American communities would be impressed by the willingness of students of religion to live in a building that might burn down (or in the case of the Yeshiva building, which is fireproof, might give off suffocating smoke). Theirs rather the paternal zealotry for the careful following of all procedures of the good life and the safe life that the 20th century has elaborated. The essence of state, town, and municipal law is regulation; and legalisms constitute the now generally accepted code and governance of local life, with lawyers their high priests.

All very well—except that very few American schools, seminaries, colleges, universities, religious retreats, monasteries, hospitals, asylumns, or orphanages could ever have been

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started under comparable restrictions. Certainly it would be difficult for any new ones to start today, unless endowed by men of great fortunes, now scarce. And certainly no American school could have grown and developed with strict limitations upon numbers, acreage, and activities. In a sense the multifarious regulations of zoning ordinances (relatively new in American life) represent an attempt of a suddenly mature country, jealous of its high living standard and alarmed by growth, newness, and change, to freeze the pattern of its economic, philanthropic, and spiritual enterprise. If in such a situation new institutions for Americans fare badly, institutions for refugees and DP's—or for any minority group—fare worse: they have relatively few friends to aid them in costly compliance to complicated regulations. In the case of the Yeshiva, compliance could add twenty per cent to the purchase cost of the property.

How explain precisely the insistence of a Zoning Board of Appeals on putting legal and financial obstacles in the path of a new religious community, restricting numbers and acreage, and forbidding the teaching of trades that were so vital a part of the original idea for a transplanted Yeshiva and a renewed Orthodoxy? Clearly there were no selfish motives at work. The Board members donate their services and their time. They are probably considerably more given to thinking of their township as a community than most of its other citizens. Anti-Semitism? They are charged by township ordinance to regulate the conditions of settlement of charitable institutions; and some time ago they gave an informal cold shoulder to directors of a convalescent home, not Jewish, who had an eye on the Brewster property. There is warrant for believing that they wished to be of guidance to the foreign group appealing to them. The decision itself, however, seems to pursue two lines of thinking: Americanize the Yeshiva, or more precisely, Westchesterize it. Keep it small, limit it. Certainly it indicates no feeling that the Yeshiva could enrich the township and contribute to American education.

An instructive clash of law. Talmudic study is itself highly legalistic. Its own legalisms, indeed, are thought of as serving as a sort of hedge by which Orthodox Jews keep themselves and their heritage separate from the world. But surely this hedge, with all its 613 Talmudic obligations, never had the height nor the rigidity of the fences which American suburbanites have erected to enclose themselves. A legalism dedicated to Deity and brotherhood does not separate; a legalism dedicated to middle-class man must separate —its core and aims are exclusiveness, separation. For what ritual do these latter-day fences sanctify, what faith do they safeguard? The ritual of the cocktail properly chilled, the belief in the saving elite, not of the righteous, but of those properly bred and knowledgeable in the one thousand and one sacred amenities. And perhaps beneath it such larger human issues as a fear of death, sickness, and poverty.

In any case, the opponents of the Yeshiva found the decision satisfactory and were content to retire from further argument. The students of the Yeshiva found it unsatisfactory, indeed not a little disturbing. Rabbi Weissmandl had to talk to them for two hours to convince the more upset that the decision was not a prelude to concentration camps and that there were no gas chambers in America. Furthermore, other residents of the township became troubled over what seemed to be threats to civil liberties. Some criticized the Board, although the Board was, in a sense, expressing in sum, as it was supposed to, the sense of the township. Others, in some excitement, sweepingly blamed Northern Westchester in general for erecting property rights over human values. Some of the more forthright girded themselves for a cause célèbre. New Castle once again found itself in considerable turmoil. It was at this juncture that it fell to Rabbi Weissmandl to settle what the Yeshiva would do next.

Legally, the position of the Yeshiva appeared in no sense discouraging. The constitutionality of zoning ordinances rests on an extension of the police power of the separate

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states and their subdivisions; the ordinances are considered essential to the public welfare, a thing undefined except as the courts interpret it. At times it has been stretched to embrace numerous sorts of petty tyranny. The US Supreme Court, however, has made clear that zoning restriction "cannot be imposed if it does not bear a substantial relation to the public health, safety, morals, or general welfare." To take an example, it might well seem to the courts that the study of trades in the midst of over two hundred acres could hardly endanger public health, safety, morals, or welfare. Sharp limitation of the school's acreage could hardly enhance them. A zoning board, furthermore, is not a state legislature. The courts might not look with favor upon a zoning board's imposition of rules about the spacing of beds, the calling of doctors, the securing of restaurant permits, and the conversion of teaching methods.*

But, as it suddenly appeared, Rabbi Weissmandl was not inclined to trouble himself very much with legal analysis. The Yeshiva needed quiet to get on with its work, even if it meant that the Rabbi had to desert scholarship yet a little longer to raise extra funds. The Yeshiva needed a welcome; it did not want a battle of law or of any other sort. It was Rabbi Weissmandl's view that the concern of his community was with inward religion, not outward situations. He said, "We wish not to overrate opposition; we feel no antagonism. We have had major annoyances. We don't react to little stitches." Then, without calculation, he issued this statement:

"We are satisfied with the decision of the New Castle Zoning Board. It would be easier for us without the twenty-five restrictions imposed by the Board, but we will hope by degrees to convince our friends and neighbors that they have no cause to be afraid of how we will behave. We have been through a great deal in Europe, where for the past ten years we have known bitter persecution. We hope our neighbors will understand that this is why we are sometimes shy, but we are very grateful for their kindness to us and hope they will give us understanding and sympathy."

WITHIN the township, tension eased. A neighbor-objector offered the Yeshiva a supplemental source of water on his own land. The Zoning Board, braced perhaps for arguments, battles, and court appeals, found itself able to listen with very warm tolerance to suggestions for easing certain of the restrictions it had laid down and began to talk informally of cutting down limitations on activities and acreage. It was thinking, it said, of once-and-for-all permission to operate, not a temporary permit, once the basic pattern of fire and health rules had been met. And interested citizens began to discuss what could be done for the Yeshiva rather than what could be argued about it.

What brought this change? A man of God who having been troubled by major annoyances refused to feel stitches? It cannot be known. Even at this late date, the Yeshiva matter is not much more than half-way settled. Rabbi Weissmandl, however, remains smiling and serene and his eyes are very penetrating. He says with warm pride and with very deep humility, "I hope time will pass and people will recognize that we are decent people." The Rabbi's smile, perhaps, has been more effective than extended considerations of the public welfare. Perhaps, indeed, it is the public welfare.

*Zoning ordinances, so far as they relate to charitable institutions, exist in a sort of legal never-never land. Ordinances even within a single state vary widely. Some towns permit institutions of all kinds without restrictions; others, like New Castle, permit certain institutions with restrictions; still others prohibit particular institutions or all institutions. The legality of such prohibition, while not involved in the Yeshiva case, is a matter of interesting indefinition. The courts generally make a distinction between charitable and profit-making institutions, and in many cases (a number of which, interestingly, have involved Jewish groups) they have upheld the right of hospitals, orphanages, and old people's homes to buy or build in residence areas restricted against them. The right of churches has always been upheld. In some cases it has been denied that mental hospitals have such a right. There is a dearth of cases of direct bearing upon religious educational communities, but there would seem a very strong possibility that the courts would hold unconstitutional such parts of local ordinances as forbade them altogether. Furthermore, they might not uphold harrying limitations upon them.

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JEWISH LIFE IN THE RUSSIAN SATELLITES

The Prospects for Recovery under Totalitarianism

NATHAN REICH

BY NOW the future of two segments of the 1,500,000 European Jews who survived World War II (outside of Russia) can be charted with reasonable accuracy; the fate of the third, those living in the Soviet satellites, still hangs in the balance.

The Jewish communities in Western Europe, we now know, will definitely survive, though, to be sure, there is and will continue to be some individual migration to Israel and other countries. These communities have effected a remarkable social and economic recovery, and the countries in which they live have taken in and provided homes for tens of thousands of Jews fleeing from Eastern Europe. France is likely to become the largest center of Jewish life in Europe.

Just as definitely do we know that Jewish life will not revive in Central Europe. In Germany and Austria, except for insignificant numbers of native Jews, half-Jews, and quarter-Jews, the Jewish population after the war consisted of displaced Jews of Eastern European origin who are now being rapidly evacuated to Israel or prepared for emigration to the United States and other countries. In a few years Central Europe, once the center of a flourishing Jewish life, will become almost as *Judenrein* as Hitler had threatened it would be.

The third and largest portion of European Jewry, the Jews in countries within the Soviet sphere of influence (but outside Russia proper), is now estimated at 670,000. While flight and emigration have reduced their number by more than 200,000 from the 1946 postwar peak, they still represent about 57 per cent of the Jewish population of Europe. Today, four years after liberation, the destiny of the Jews of Eastern Europe is still uncertain. However, especially in recent months, increasingly definite trends make it possible to trace the likely pattern of the future.

IN THE whole Russian-satellite area, several overriding realities have become clearly visible beneath the variant conditions in one country or another. The first and foremost of these realities is the transformed economic and social structure. The combined task of restoring a war-devastated economy and building a collectivist society has imposed an unusually heavy strain upon the whole population; but the Jewish population has perhaps borne the heaviest burden. In Western Europe, where there was no break in the continuity of economic, social, and political institutions, Jews could and did resume where they left off in 1939—with some special difficulties and with outside aid, to be sure. Eastern Europe's Jews, however, are confronted with a completely new environment.

In the early postwar period there were some indications that the satellite countries might be permitted to chart a relatively independent

How do Jews live today in Poland, Rumania, Hungary, and the other Russian satellite countries—and what is the chance for a continuation of Jewish community life there? It has not been easy to piece together any coherent picture out of the disconnected items of news coming from the countries of Eastern Europe, formerly the homes of the most populous Jewish communities in the world. NATHAN REICH, who was for some years head of the research department of the Joint Distribution Committee, and late in 1947 visited the countries under Russia's influence to observe at first hand the efforts of the remaining Jews to re-establish themselves, here tries to give a coherent, over-all view of current efforts at Jewish rehabilitation in Eastern Europe. Dr. Reich is chairman of the department of economics at Hunter College. He was born in Galicia in 1900, and studied in Prague, at McGill University, the University of Chicago, and at Columbia, where he received his doctoral degree.

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course and evolve a "mixed" form of economic organization, in which the public sector would be confined to large-scale industry, while medium and small-scale enterprise would continue under cooperative and private management. Recently, however, there has been a swing toward full collectivization of virtually all aspects of economic and social life. The independent entrepreneur in industry and trade is being rapidly eliminated, and only political and tactical considerations prevent, for the time being, the application of similar measures to agriculture.

Whatever the ultimate social and economic merits of a collectivist society, the immediate impact of collectivization upon the lives, livelihood, and social status of large masses of Jews was bound to be little short of shattering. To be sure, a collectivist society offers opportunities of its own; it usually requires a larger industrial labor force and offers the former merchants and entrepreneurs the opportunity of becoming members of a growing "proletariat." And proletarian status in a collectivized society has its advantages, too—though they are best discerned when viewed from the comfortably distant vantage-point of a sympathetic outside observer. To the immediate subject of the collectivistic experiment, however, the process of compulsory proletarianization is much less attractive; it involves a loss of economic position, of traditional skill, of income, and of social status—the last of great importance in the highly coordinated and ideologically charged atmosphere of a "collectivist society."

A SECOND factor of perhaps greater importance militating against Jewish readjustment in Eastern Europe is the tragic experience of the war years, combined with the continuing deep-seated anti-Semitism of uncomfortably large sections of the inhabitants. The reigning ideology demands a policy of complete racial and ethnic equality, and the new constitutions have made this a basic law. Within the limits of public power, the governments, particularly at their top levels, endeavor to enforce this policy. The powers of governments, however, cannot enforce full compliance at all levels of administration in the face of widespread antagonism, and most certainly cannot impose a pattern of behavior upon the whole population and prevent those innumerable indirect, extra-legal manifestations which continue to disturb and frighten Jews. And when we consider that the governments themselves are not the free choice of the people, and bear the stamp of a foreign power, we can understand their reluctance to add to the fuel of the opposition by showing excessive zeal in defending the interests of the Jews.

This has become particularly apparent in the halting and equivocal manner in which these governments have acted in the matter of property restitution. The original restitution laws were already riddled with significant exceptions in favor of the new owners of former Jewish property. Their effectiveness was further whittled down by half-hearted and dilatory efforts at enforcement. In some instances, as in Czechoslovakia, mob pressures prevented the enforcement of court rulings.

Except for Bulgaria and Yugoslavia, anti-Semitism in Eastern Europe has had a long history. It was immensely strengthened during the occupation years, not only by systematic Nazi propaganda, but by the vivid demonstration that Jews could be tortured and slaughtered and Jewish goods stolen with impunity. It continues during the postwar years, nourished by general discontent over hard times, by social and political friction engendered by the suppression of all opposition, and by the general tension which prevails in times of drastic shifts of political and economic power.

Nor are matters improved by the fact that individual Jews occupy leading governmental positions, particularly in Poland, Hungary, and Rumania. Though everyone knows that tens of thousands of Jews have been ruined by the nationalization of industry and trade, and that, given the opportunity, tens of thousands would flee to other lands, these facts do not outweigh the presence of Hilary Minc as the Minister of Industry in Poland, Vice Premier Matyas Rakosi as the power behind the throne in Hungary, and Ana Pauker as the fore-

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most agent of Cominform Policy in Rumania.

The extent and depth of postwar anti-Semitism may be gauged by the fact that in the summer of 1947, more than two years after liberation, Jews and non-Jews pointed to the free unmolested movement of Jews on the highways of Poland as a great accomplishment. And so it was, when viewed against the background of frequent murder of Jews in 1945 and 1946. Today, although sporadic instances of mob violence still occur—recently the Jewish Hospital in Bratislava, Slovakia, one of the best in the country, was damaged—the physical security of the Jewish population in all the countries of Eastern Europe is generally assured. Physical security, however, is hardly enough, and the atmosphere of tension is frequently enough to tip the scales in favor of emigration.

STILL another factor favors emigration. The Jews in the East have family ties and cultural associations with Israel and the West. There is hardly a family without relatives in Israel, or in the United States and other Western countries, and the urge to join relatives has become a most powerful drive among the surviving Jews, most of whom have lost the bulk of their families in the cataclysm of war. The most poignant impression one brings home from a visit to the pitifully shrunken Jewish communities in Eastern Europe is of their utter loneliness, their feeling of isolation, and the ever-present irrepressible hunger to find emotional security in the midst of the more fortunately situated branches of families in Israel and the West.

This loneliness is also of the spirit. All aspects of Jewish life are being rapidly "coordinated" to fit into the pattern of the monolithic state and arid culture forged in Russia. The general cultural spirit is secularistic and, paradoxically enough, nationalistic, that is, unfriendly to genuine ethnic and cultural diversity. Jewish organizations are "enthusiastically" dissolving themselves. Those who resist suicide and refuse to attend their own funerals are pressured into amalgamation with central Communist-dominated Jewish organizations, and the most ruthless pressure is applied to organizations with Western affiliations, from the socialistically militant Bund in Poland to B'nai B'rith lodges, now declared to harbor "imperialist reactionaries," in Bulgaria. Recently, the policy of isolating East European Jews from the West has been extended to bring under attack pure welfare and relief organizations. At the beginning of March, the Rumanian government closed the offices of the JDC, the OSE, and the ORT.

It is true that minorities are granted "autonomous" rights. Jews in Poland are permitted to maintain schools with Yiddish as the language of instruction; the schools are now financed largely by funds of the JDC, but a promise has been given that they will soon become a charge of the public budget. There are also Jewish schools in Rumania, and one finds Yiddish theaters, publications, and Jewish cultural organizations in Poland and Rumania. This "autonomy," however, is purely linguistic: one is free to praise the regime and serve its dominant ideals in Yiddish—but praise and conform one must. It is an autonomy of form and not of substance. Religious activities are permitted, but the general atmosphere—in conformity with the tenets of Marxism—is unfriendly to religious expression. Official attitudes toward Israel have been friendly in international tribunals, but Zionists at home have recently found the road increasingly harder; the old Soviet canard of identifying Zionism with Anglo-American imperialism has again been dusted off, and is being used in an intense campaign against Zionism and emigration.

Thus all Jews—the religious, the Zionist, the nationalistically and culturally minded—except only the small group of convinced Communists—feel increasingly isolated from the large Jewish communities in Israel, the United States, and other Western countries. For this the political "alliance" with the approximately 1,800,000 Jews in the Soviet Union is little compensation; for the Jews of Eastern Europe remain cut off from the Jews in Russia, and the Russian Jews themselves are in an advanced stage of religious and cultural anemia.

All this adds up to a general uneasiness

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that is reflected vividly, not only in the widespread desire to emigrate but in the present substantial rate of actual emigration. There is, of course, no way to measure the strength of the urge to leave. But we may recall Lenin's famous image of the Russian soldiers voting against World War I with their feet. Jews in Eastern Europe are also voting with their feet: when given the chance, they leave in droves. The proportion of potential émigrés is probably at least one-half the Jewish population.

The establishment of Israel gave renewed impetus to the movement of emigration, which in the cases of Bulgaria and Yugoslavia became a full-fledged exodus. Within the past three or four months almost three-fourths of the 45,000 Bulgarian Jews and one-half of the 11,000 Yugoslav Jews have departed for Israel. Although the ceremonies held at the departure of emigrants dutifully end with thanks and toasts to Stalin and local Communist dignitaries, the zeal to exchange the new peoples' democracies for the "imperialistic" outside world is unmistakable. During 1948, sizable groups of Jews left Rumania, and plans were set afoot arranging for substantial emigration from both Czechoslovakia and Hungary.

However, any prospect of a quick solution via emigration to East European Jewry's ordeal has in recent months disappeared as one satellite country after another has put onerous restrictions on emigration. (This is in marked contrast to 1948, when no obstacles were placed on large-scale movement to Israel.) In Rumania particularly, efforts to leave have become very hazardous. The *Jewish Morning Journal* of March 9 reported that two young Jews, who had been training at a Halutz farm in preparation for life in Israel, had been shot to death while trying to cross the Rumanian border into Hungary. At the beginning of March, the Hungarian government disavowed the reports that it was negotiating a far-reaching immigration agreement with Israel. Accordingly, many Jews are today endeavoring to adjust to their new circumstances, on the assumption that it may be a long, long time before they can get out. Reconstructing their lives as best they can on their native soil, they have restored a semblance of communal life, and wherever possible have established synagogues, schools, and other cultural institutions, in the face of the discouraging environment we have described.

The process of economic recovery has gone farthest in Poland, where virtually every able-bodied adult Jew willing to work has been able to find a place in the new economy. The income of the gainfully employed is low and leaves little margin for the support of orphan children, invalids, the sick, schools, and religious institutions, so the Jewish community is not as yet self-supporting. Economic conditions, however, are gradually improving, and Polish Jewry is gradually freeing itself from the necessity of relying on foreign relief to carry on its welfare and communal responsibilities.

Indeed, the economic rehabilitation of Polish Jewry forms a really remarkable chapter of postwar Jewish history. Fewer than 40,000 Jews emerged from the forests and hiding-places when the Germans were finally driven from Poland. From 20,000 to 30,000 more returned from the labor camps of Germany and Austria, and in the spring of 1946, 150,000 more appeared, the hardy survivors of some 350,000 Jews who had fled or had been deported to the Soviet Union. The Jewish population of Poland reached a peak of about 220,000 in the summer of 1946. Then, in July, came the Kielce progrom, in which 41 Jews were massacred in broad daylight, and over 120,000 Jews fled in panic to the security of the American Zone in Germany. Today there are about 85,000 Jews in Poland, a little more than two per cent of the pre-war population.

The Jews of Poland had nothing left and returned to nothing. They were completely uprooted, social atoms without home or property or—in most cases—family. Their conditions were far worse than in any of the surrounding countries. In those early days after the war, few saw any hope for the reestablishment of Jewish life in Poland, and Dr. Joseph J. Schwartz of the JDC, among the first

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Americans to visit Poland in 1945, reported that Polish Jews were "sitting on their valises," waiting to get out.

Yet, as it turned out, it was just this absolute ruin and destitution that made it possible for Polish Jews to stage the strongest economic comeback of any Jewish community in Eastern Europe. Adjustment to the new conditions that prevailed in Eastern Europe required a drastic break with the past: with no past left, Polish Jewry could only enter on a completely new path.

So we find that, while private trade was still widespread in post-liberation Poland, barely 7 or 8 per cent of the remaining Jews returned to private trade. Jews have set themselves up as craftsmen, have secured employment in state enterprises, and, most significantly, have developed a network of more than two hundred producers cooperatives, supported by JDC funds and aided and assisted by the government. (This occupational shift, of course, was also made possible by the fact that it was those who had skills who had the best chance to survive in the German labor camps and under the rigorous conditions of wartime Russia.) These producers cooperatives, some of which have served as a model of organization for the entire country, produced goods (clothing, leather goods, shoes, carpentry, metal-work) worth four billion zlotys ($10,000,000) in 1948, and will produce more in 1949. They have six thousand members, who earn a more than average income, and who, with dependents, make up close to one-fifth of the Jewish population.

An additional factor favoring economic recovery was the fact that Poland had taken over from Germany important territories, and had summarily ejected the German inhabitants. Here were these empty lands, with empty homes and unworked industrial premises, which the Polish government was anxious to fill again as soon as possible with an industrious and hard-working population. The settlement of Jews was encouraged in the new lands, and over one-half of remaining Polish Jewry took up life again in Silesia. There was also an important psychological factor on the new frontier: all the newcomers, Jews and Poles, were on the same level. The Jews did not have the difficult task of re-establishing themselves among a settled, sullen, and resentful populace. With elbow-room enough for everybody, there was much less tension between Jews and Poles in the new territories than in the old Poland.

WHEN we turn to Hungary, we see quite a different picture. The 170,000 Jews remaining in Hungary have claimed a higher proportion of JDC funds than those of any other European country, outside of the countries with DP camps. As a by-product of their frightful ordeal, the surviving Polish Jews showed a favorable age and occupational distribution—favorable, that is, for purposes of economic reconstruction. Hungarian Jews, on the other hand, show a very high proportion of aged, and a very small proportion of persons who can find gainful employment in the "new Hungary." We find that 50 per cent of the surviving Jews are over thirty-four, 18 per cent are over sixty, and that 66 percent of the Jewish population over forty-five are women, most of whom are unemployable. The majority of the Jewish survivors are inhabitants of Budapest, and include only an insignificant proportion of craftsmen and industrial workers.

The Jews of Hungary, encouraged by the overwhelmingly anti-Communist sentiment of the country and the non-Communist complexion of the early postwar governments, believed with the rest of the Hungarians that there would be some kind of return to "normalcy." They expected that the country would soon settle down with some kind of left-of-center government presiding over an economy in which only large-scale industry and banking would be nationalized. Overwhelmingly middle class and not so thoroughly uprooted, as compared with Polish Jews, they strongly resisted "proletarianization," and attempted to return to their pre-war activities. Their limited success in this direction is now being swept away altogether as the country moves toward complete collectivization.

Of an employable population of roughly

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70,000, some 25 or 35 thousand draw an uncertain livelihood from small-scale trading, 10,000 are employed in state enterprises and offices, and the remaining 30,000 live on the periphery of the economy: on relief, or on a small income from peddling and other submarginal pursuits. If Hungarian Jews are to be integrated into the new Hungarian economy, about one-half of the population will require training in some occupation. The government has launched a program of industrial expansion that will require 300,000 industrial workers: but these will be drawn primarily from the agricultural population.

The best solution—barring as we must the possibility of imminent emigration—would seem to be a vigorous development of producers cooperatives, on the Polish model. These would serve the dual function of supplying tools, materials, and orders to Jewish craftsmen, and providing training facilities to those without skills. The JDC has started such a program of cooperatives, and at the moment ten, with a membership of 400 persons, are in operation. The success of this enterprise depends on the general course of economic recovery in Hungary, the extent of government assistance, and the response from the Hungarian Jews. The relative weakness of Zionism among the Hungarian Jews before the war and the limited prospects for emigration suggest that Hungarian Jewry will try to make an effort to find some place for itself in the new order.

THE Rumanian problem is essentially the same, except that there are twice as many Jews in Rumania as in Hungary—350,000, or some 50,000 less than in 1947. Two facts explain the high number surviving: the core of the Jewish community—the 250,000 Jews of Old Rumania—was spared the ordeal of deportation; and the others, the Jews from the provinces acquired by Rumania after 1918, were sent to forced labor in the Rumanian-occupied sections of the Ukraine, rather than to extermination camps; many of them returned after the war. Moreover, the Jews in Old Rumania were not left as destitute materially as the Jews of Poland or Hungary: following the liberation, many of them succeeded in salvaging the property they had disposed of at panic prices to their non-Jewish neighbors, and many others got some kind of economic foothold. Until the summer of 1947, the economy was "free," and, with JDC assistance, the net of pre-war credit cooperatives was revived and thousands of small merchants and craftsmen were helped to get started. By the summer of 1947, about one-half of Rumanian Jewry was economically self-supporting and even contributing to the support of communal and religious institutions. The other half led a precarious existence on the fringes of the economy, depending on casual earnings, relatives in Rumania and abroad, and JDC relief.

The drive toward complete nationalization of industry and trade that began in the summer of 1947 gave a sharp jolt to this partial recovery of Rumanian Jewry. Small-scale private trade still enjoys legal existence but is being rapidly hemmed in by government enterprise. While the credit cooperatives were exempted from the sweeping decree nationalalizing banking, their operations were limited to craftsmen and employes, and the private traders and small entrepreneurs who had made up half of their membership were excluded. Unable to obtain credit, without raw materials and merchandise, facing government competition, the small business men are rapidly joining the ranks of the *déclassé*. Nationalization is increasing unemployment in yet another way. While industry was in private hands, it was practically impossible to legally fire an employe; these legal restrictions have now been lifted in the interests of the greater efficiency of government enterprise.

Forty to fifty thousand Rumanian Jews will have to be retrained to fit them into the new socio-economic structure, and the JDC and ORT are sponsoring a program of vocational retraining, and here too resort has been had to the form of producers cooperatives. But the task is too vast to be shouldered by any private agency. Moreover, the recent closing of the offices of these agencies by the Rumanian government has injected a new ele-

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ment of uncertainty. Only a comprehensive plan backed by government resources could solve a problem of this magnitude. But the country is poor, its economic leadership inept, and the Jewish community is torn by internal struggles and is without accepted leadership. The Communist-dominated Jewish Democratic Committee, which has usurped the political control of the Jewish community, has launched a bitter attack on the Zionist elements of Rumanian Jewry, which has already led to the dissolution of many Zionist organizations, and the closing of one hundred centers training youth for life in Israel. Meanwhile, the economic deterioration of Rumanian Jewry continues, with no hope of halting it in sight. The strong sentiment for emigration adds to the general uncertainty and weakens any drive toward local economic rehabilitation.

POLAND, Hungary, and Rumania account for 90 per cent of the Jews of Eastern Europe, and the remaining 10 per cent are distributed among Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, and Bulgaria. There are 40,000 Jews in Czechoslovakia, mostly in Slovakia. Here the story parallels Rumania: considerable strides toward economic self-sufficiency were made in the first three postwar years, but the Communist seizure of power in January 1948 produced new uncertainties and strengthened the urge to emigrate; perhaps 20,000 Jews, it has been estimated, will leave Czechoslovakia in the near future.

In Bulgaria and Yugoslavia, the Jewish communities are in a state of virtual liquidation. Bulgaria has been singularly free from anti-Semitism, and Bulgarian Jewry was the only Jewish community in the Nazi sphere of domination which emerged from the war physically intact. This was not out of any softening on the part of the Nazis: the Bulgarian government, as well as the Bulgarian people, withstood their demands that the Jews be deported. Yet Bulgarian Jews are leaving en masse. To what extent this emigration is due to the pull of Israel and to what extent it stems from opposition to the new collectivist order it is hard to say.

THE postwar economic and social scene of Eastern Europe does not, then, inspire much faith in any substantial future for Jewish life there. But even with continued emigration, several hundred thousand Jews will remain in that area, and they will have to make the best possible adjustment to the new conditions. Barring new wars or other drastic upheavals, there should be little fear concerning their physical security and physical survival; and the ultimate integration of able-bodied Jews into the new economic order is also quite certain, slow and painful though the process may be. However, the survival of an organized and freely functioning Jewish community life can hardly be expected. The irresistible pressure toward totalitarian coordination now in full swing in the countries of Eastern Europe, and the experience of the culturally atomized Jewish community in the Soviet Union both argue against the assumption of continued Jewish life, in anything except the physical sense, in that region.

This means that Jewish life, as we in the West continue to know it, and as it has been formed by an age-old tradition and history, may well be doomed in the countries of Eastern Europe. Physically the Jews who remain will survive; but their independent institutions will be destroyed, and those "Jewish" institutions that will be allowed to remain will be nothing but arms of the government. Carrying on the Jewish heritage in any vital or identifiable way under such circumstances would seem to be precluded.

Yet it seems to me that as long as aid is permitted to reach the Jews in Eastern Europe, American Jews will wish to continue to send this aid. Emigration to lands where Jewish life can exist should, it goes without saying, have top priority: but after that should come measures of local economic rehabilitation. These are essential, whether the Jews leave or stay. If they stay, they will have to learn new trades, will have to gain their livelihood as workers; otherwise they remain completely destitute and in misery. If they manage to get out, their acquired skills and trades will aid their adjustment in countries of their choice.

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BROADWAY AND AMERICAN INTEGRITY

The Lost Souls that People our Stage

ALFRED KAZIN

BROADWAY is not usually thought of as the keeper of America's conscience, but among the serious American plays this season a favorite theme has been the American struggle for integrity. In Clifford Odets' *The Big Knife,* the setting is Hollywood, and the hero, America's favorite male star, is so dismayed by having to submit to a fourteen-years' contract, at I forget how many thousands a week, that what with his wife's contempt for him and the accumulating small wretchednesses of life, he finally cuts his throat in the bathtub. In N. Richard Nash's *The Young and Fair,* which had a short run but was really not much worse than many successful plays, only intellectually threadbare, a young, poor, and militantly liberal alumna of a fashionable junior college, serving as administrative assistant to the directress of the school (once a sterling liberal, but now unfortunately compelled for financial reasons to serve a near-fascist board of trustees), succeeds only by a hair's breadth in winning her superior back to democracy. In Fay Kanin's *Goodbye, My Fancy,* a distinguished liberal woman correspondent, returning to her old college, finds that she must struggle with the corrupt president, a former lover, to return to *his* youthful ideals. In Moss Hart's *Light Up the Sky,* a young and tenderly naive playwright, who has written a sternly "idealistic" vision of the future which on its tryout in Boston is supposed to have failed, is so roughly handled by the producer and the cast that it is not until the favorable notices have come out that he realizes he is not a martyr at all, but a triumphant visionary who has won the advantage over the crass Broadway characters around him. Even in Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman,* which is inestimably better than all the plays noted above, and one of the few things now on Broadway, along with Jean Giraudoux's *The Madwoman of Chaillot,* that even give one the experience of being at a play at all, "integrity" is somehow dragged in at the end to explain a human tragedy accountable only in deeper terms.

Of course we all know that the uniform American drive for success inflicts a certain burden of guilt. This has been a proverbial theme in our 20th-century literature. The only change of late has been in the vocation of the hero, who now—ever since it became clear that it is not only in Russia that actors and writers have great social prestige and may even enjoy incomes equal to that of the managerial elite—tends to be the intellectual who has "sold out," to Hollywood, or Luce, or the advertising agencies, then repents just in time to accept honest poverty and write the great American novel exposing Hollywood, or Luce, or the advertising agencies. Apparently it is their bad conscience that gives our ex-hucksters their morality, as their old experiences furnish their plots. It is out of bad conscience that we make our secondary literature. But then, a materialistic cul-

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WITH the end of the 1948-49 theatrical season close at hand—a year rich in variety if not distinction—ALFRED KAZIN finds one theme chiefly preoccupying the present-day American theater and its playwrights. In this article, Mr. Kazin describes their somewhat unsuccessful struggles to deal with that theme. Mr. Kazin's writing has appeared in the *New Yorker, New Republic, Partisan Review,* and numerous other magazines. He is the author of *On Native Grounds* (1942), a study of American literature, and is the editor of Viking's *Portable Blake.* Mr. Kazin, who now teaches at the New School, was born in Brooklyn in 1915 and studied at the College of the City of New York and Columbia University. He is at present working on a personal documentary of New York life, *A Walker in the City.*

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ture always knows the antidote to guilt: it attacks the boss.

For me, at least, there is always something mechanical and unexplained about the "idealism" of such plays and novels. Their writers all assume that Americans know what the good society is, that most of them are liberals by nature, kept from fulfilling themselves by the tyranny of certain dominant forces—"the big knife," Odets has told us, is not confined to Hollywood, and is meant to symbolize all the pressures upon the individual in our society. In most of these plays the drama is entirely one of will rather than of knowledge—will the hero or heroine have the courage to break with false luxury?

But if anything is clear in Odets' confusing play, it is that Charley Castle does not know what he wants, has no idea of right or wrong, is so confused by drunkenness, lechery, emotional turmoil, and actor's egomania that he does not know *where* he is half the time, and that he is reluctant to sign the fourteen-years' contract chiefly because he is afraid of earning his wife's contempt. She is his conscience, a familiar fixture in American social drama, but she is peculiarly unconvincing in this role, for she is constantly brandishing a weapon. At periodic intervals, she simply withdraws the sexual compliance that is so necessary to him. Since he owes his prominence on the national scene to the fact that he has become the favorite male fantasy of millions of Americans, he would, of course, like to feel equally dominant at home. Far from being a repressed idealist, he is a moral cretin and a scoundrel. He runs over a child in his automobile, and allows his press agent to go to jail for him. Odets tells us that this is because of the pressure of the studio on him; that he finds no happiness in his luxurious Brentwood surroundings and would be happiest back in the Village—all through the play Waverly Place is longingly invoked as the honest American's lost Arcadia—with his wife, child, and Rouaults. It is impossible to believe this. Obviously he *likes* being Hollywood's "difficult" star, the quasi-intellectual New Yorker who despite his tough roles on the screen spends his money on Rouaults rather than the races. There is a moment in the play when his agent, trying to persuade him to do a particularly bad script, says in exasperation but also with admiring wonder, something like: "Do you have to say no to every script the studio shows you?"—at which the hero complacently smiles. No, no: this one obviously likes Brentwood, the adoring Negro butler, the pleasure of shocking the Louella Parsons columnist with the "foreign" pictures on his walls, the double ice bucket on the bar—that double ice bucket which, as one of Charley's girls says in such awe, *always* has ice cubes in it, such a luxury, for everyone in this play drinks all day long. And obviously, too, the studio magnate, villainous as he is, will not keep Charley Castle from doing an occasional Broadway play, if his heart is really set on it; the movie-makers have been known to profit from such "folly" on the part of their biggest stars. What Charley Castle wants is not very clear, but part of it is certainly his wife's homage; and even that he has somehow recaptured by the last act.

What, then, makes Charley so acutely miserable? Is it simply the pressure of the studio, the bad scripts they force him to do? Is it perhaps his guilt over the accident, which, though it gnaws at him, is never enough to make him think once of going to the police? Is it simply the craving for integrity that explains John Garfield's nightly rages at the National Theatre? Is Charley really the common man caught under the big knife of American oligarchy? Somehow those rages touch on something else, without ever defining it, for Charley is ridiculous without being pitiful. All through *The Big Knife* I had the uneasy feeling that the lines were in excess of the play and that Odets knew it; that they were not even meant for *this* play. Integrity cannot be the subject of *The Big Knife*, for the hero is too limited to convince us of his struggles; so far as the play touches on integrity in any real sense, it is symbolically, as a reflection of Odets' personal humiliation in Hollywood. But integrity is the familiar convention—we want to be honest, but it costs

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too much!—which he has introduced to support a certain violence of personal declamation. *The Big Knife* is a bad play, and Odets has written bad plays before; but never before did I feel at a play of his the pathos of a half-conscious insincerity in the choice of subject and characters. It is the most uncharacteristic of his plays, the most external and arbitrary—he literally didn't know how to end it. He must have felt himself in a corner when he wrote it, for at times he actually quotes old lines of his as a joke, parodying the intensely personal rhetoric of his early plays.

But if the play out-Hollywoods Hollywood, it is full, even over-laden with Odets' own desperate emotions. The emotions are irrelevant to the action, they *make* the play so far as there is one at all, while Odets shouts over the heads of his characters. But what was he aiming for here? Why has he insisted that the play is only nominally about Hollywood—an ironic point when one considers that the play almost certainly owes much of its success to the *éclat* of a Hollywood setting and the fact that John Garfield, "in person," stars in it? On the lowest level, I think, it is Odets' understandable bitterness against Hollywood; above it, an honest if confused sorrow over the 30's and the golden era of American-Soviet friendship—one of the significant and most passionate statements in the play comes when the wife cries out in lament for the dead FDR, the father of us all—what has happened to us since then? How could we have fallen into this political ice age? But on a higher and more crucial level it is Odets' own pain and rhetoric seeking an antagonist, Odets in open mourning for the stormy and deeply satisfying days when there was still a certain revolutionary quickness in the air and America was not so full of fear as it is today. Actually Odets was never a dramatist of "social consciousness" either in the best or the worst sense of a phrase now confined to its agit-prop meaning; his flair is for intuitive revelations of personal character. The strength of an Odets play is usually its monologues; it will be noticed that the characters are usually too moved by each other to reply quickly. This happens even in *The Big Knife,* but here the big speeches are forced, parody Hollywood grandiloquence, and only batter people into submission. Nevertheless, Odets did depend for a certain formal love and hope upon the world's moving in the "right" direction. His characters might denounce themselves as the most lost and wretched of earth—and they were; but in Odets' mind they were clowns calling an end to the age of artifice.

Now, to judge from the savage misanthropy that bursts through all the bad Hollywood jokes about Hollywood in *The Big Knife,* there is nothing. Emotionally—and this is not so much a play as it is a furtive commentary on a concealed situation—the central element in it is protest against *the absolute desperateness of the present.*

I am surprised that so little has been said about this. It is the subject of the loudest and most pitiful exclamations in the play; it is repeated so often as to make it clear that the pain, the horror, the total disorientation, go far beyond Hollywood; that so far as this protest can have any application in space at all, it covers the whole length and breadth of the American myth; it cries out in the bitterest rage against America's invocation and betrayal of happiness. It makes clear Odets' underlying conviction that we do not betray ourselves at all, but that our culture is simply inhuman, and makes us its prisoners, next to the double ice buckets that *always* have ice in them. Hence the formal theme of "integrity" is only an excuse for Odets' incoherent anger; he thinks as little of Charley Castle as we do; "integrity" is a theme that everyone in this country can recognize and respond to; the man who "sells his soul to Hollywood" is really innocent, and even to be regarded with a certain affection, for we sacrifice upon him all our real, or imaginary, or tentative guilt. But I doubt that "America" is the ultimate object of Odets' wrath. I think it is himself. *The Big Knife* is a work of spiritual confusion, and the problem of integrity in Hollywood is only a convenient approach to the

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problem without meeting it. If happiness were only a question of living up to our ideals, why do we define our ideals so badly?

In Moss Hart's *Light Up the Sky* integrity again serves as a convention; the naively idealistic playwright even wins the prize in the end, to the amazement of the producer and the cast. But of course this is only a comedy at the expense of certain well-known theater people; no one can believe for a moment in the play they are supposed to be doing. If Hart made his young hero-playwright so simple, it was only as a foil, to show the Broadway animals fighting among themselves. Here one man's idealism or "integrity"—call it what you will—is only a pretext, and the point of the joke is that the damned Utopian thing they are playing has the makings of a hit in it, after all. The Broadway wiseacres are all confounded, and gather around the now triumphant young playwright to be nice again. Of course it is all a joke; there never *was* such a play, there never *could* be such a play; it exists only by virtue of Moss Hart's genial patronage, a parody of his marginal self.

For consider the difference between *Light Up the Sky* and the play that is set up for its mockery. Hart is never confused, or angry, like his young hero, or Clifford Odets; any excess of emotion or waste of force would be as incongruous as a Bible lesson on a pair of nylons; he makes only streamlined goods. This particular piece of goods happens to be a play about theater people, and from the moment the curtain goes up there is that familiar exhilaration on the part of actors playing actors, not to forget that some of these are very well-known theater people, and that the dominant figure on the stage, Sam Levene, is playing one of the most "lovable" Broadway tycoons of our day. The setting—a white sitting-room in the Boston Ritz that gleams like a Madison Avenue jewelry shop—is more than half the play: American *luxe suprême,* the audience was flattered to be let in on so many Broadway trade secrets, gasped with delight to hear the producer's tough wife making jokes about male sex organs, waited in ecstasy for each character to be delivered of some new riposte. One felt the excitement from the first: it was a privilege to be there—a woman next to me kept screaming, "He's killing me! That Moss Hart, he simply kills me! Have you ever *heard* such . . . !" We were in the hands of a playwright who would never let down this tired but eager audience for a minute. The lines got harder and bolder; never had there been such a Jewish producer so noisily and ecstatically Jewish, yet at the same time such a figure of moral yearning, incarnate with the American businessman's longing for cultural prestige—three hundred thousand dollars on a play in which the leading lady went about in rags! Still, there was a certain clumsy heroism about this man: investing all that money in an "idealistic" play about the "future" did represent for him an act of faith. At the moment when the production seems to have failed, he turns on the young playwright like all the rest, storms against him asking comically for restitution, runs up and down the stage shrieking, lamenting, the most "charmingly" vulgar Jewish tycoon you have ever seen. But when the rather encouraging notices come in before dawn and he realizes he hasn't thrown away all that money after all, he apologizes to the young playwright, and with one shrewd and admiring confession gives the game away and ties up Moss Hart's play in an atmosphere of plain common sense—you were right after all, he tells the young playwright; I was wrong not to follow out my first hunch about you; but for heaven's sake let's now be *sensible;* let's fix up the play so there won't be any danger of it failing!

It is not until almost the very end of Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman* that the problem of integrity is *named,* as it is all through plays like *The Big Knife, Goodbye, My Fancy,* and *The Young and Fair.* But here, at least, integrity is not a rhetorical substitute for intelligence, and certainly not the makings of a joke, as it is to Moss Hart. It represents the climax of personal discovery, on the part of a son who all his life has

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suffered from the grandiloquent deceits of his salesman-father, and now, desperately aware that it is almost too late, struggles to make the father look squarely at his life for once. And significantly, it is the least convincing passage in the play, dramatically even an interruption of its emotional rhythm. For *Death of a Salesman,* though in idea an attack upon the self-deceptions and hollow expansiveness of the American booster, is in effect not so much *about* the vainglory of the success story as it is the decline and fall of a human soul; and this is all to Miller's credit, he does not need to spell out his meaning in the son's speech near the end.

The immense tragic force with which Lee Cobb plays the salesman, reminding us at every point that a man is dying before our eyes, not a symbol, has already so deeply pledged us to follow to the end one individual existence that the son's last-minute appeal to the father to "know yourself" seems curiously unreal. Is Willy Loman's life only the parable of a familiar lower-middle-class failure, the story of the naive little dreamer run down by the juggernaut of American power? This, presumably, is the "meaning" of the play—but only in the sense that the meaning of a man bleeding to death in the street is that he has been run down by an automobile. It was not this meaning that I carried away from *Death of a Salesman.* On the contrary, what makes it memorable is a concentration of tragic insight and pity directed entirely on the theme of individual destiny. The audience is not so much moved by the situation as it is stunned by the unexpected, the unhoped-for, dignity of emotion brought to bear on it.

THE play is a dream, the story of a man dreaming his own death, a man always outside the social framework in which he is trying to recapture a fictitious place. What is actually said on the stage is the paraphrase of an emotion—felt from the moment Lee Cobb, with that harsh and individual pathos of his, shambles onto the stage under the weight of his salesman's cases, struggling late at night to get into a house that is not one in which people have lived or could live, for it is an expressionistic nightmare, the idea of his doom. The weight of Cobb's suffering is so heavy upon the stage that no one can believe for a moment that his dying is reducible to a social formula.

Why, then, the son's stilted plea for integrity? Why do all the characters gather around Willy Loman, pleading with him to be something other than he is? Why are Miller's emotional honesty and directness in conceiving his characters not equalled by interpretative power? His situations usually have deep family roots; the dominant relationship in this play, as in his first, *All My Sons,* is a strong attraction and repulsion between father and son; but he likes to attribute the son's disillusionment with the father—the basic motif in his work—to a past social cause, the father's outward guilt. In *All My Sons* it was the father's dishonesty in selling the government defective planes; in *Death of a Salesman* it is the father's adultery.

Yet in both plays the father so dominates the action, his sons so openly betray their resentment of his greater strength, that it is obvious that the hostility between them is intrinsic and has deeper causes than the father's wrongdoing, which in fact is only a legal synonym for his greater guilt, a way of "explaining" it, and therefore an excuse for his suicide. In both plays of Miller's the real subject is the father's realization that he must die and the son's half-expressed awareness that he has been threatening the father and will let him off only by his death. They are really Freudian plays, built up out of great depths of feeling, crystallizing around strong family archetypes. But for some reason Miller likes to rationalize their inherent tensions into "topical" drama. Ostensibly, Willy Loman might not have died if he had caught on to himself in time, if only he had had integrity. So that if you ask what *Death of a Salesman* is "about," Miller's last-minute moral forces you to say—what one's whole experience of the play works against—that it shows up our American success story. Society explains Willy Loman; is Willy Loman, then, only our society *made clear?*

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Somehow one doubts it. This is partly because Cobb's emotional complexity, his unconscious deep air of grievance, is always in excess of naive Willy Loman (originally, I gather, the part called for a small man, the proverbial American drummer, to be flanked by a big-looking wife, whereas here Cobb had to be set off by the marvelously humble, thin, diminutive Mildred Dunnock), for by his very presence on the stage, his inveterate suggestion of some human pain too deep for words, one momentarily expects him to cry out like Lear on the heath. And partly because Elia Kazan's direction results in so hypnotic a "mood" play that, as with his productions of Tennessee Williams, one hardly knows what the *play* is like. It is characteristic of Broadway today that one goes to see not a play but a production; more and more our sophisticated theater seeks the condition of our movies, where the script-writer is just another employe working for expert manipulators, an "idea man," and everything is calculated to a specific audience reaction, as in radio, group journalism, and totalitarian political rallies.

I used to think that this dominance of the production-machine over the playwright was an autonomous technical development, for as our playwrights become less individual, the directors and production "experts" must of necessity do a great deal of their thinking for them. And certainly it is not to be overlooked that the subtly woven "atmosphere" which Elia Kazan learned in the *ateliers* of the Group Theatre (by way of Stanislavsky) has become indispensable to the really chic Broadway production. But obviously a more crucial reason is the increasing number of solitary character-studies on our stage, quite outside any "dramatic" situation except the toil and stress of the unconscious, and therefore to be softened, diffused, in a sense even replaced, by artfully stylized productions which really serve as liberal formulas—i.e., they ascribe success or failure to social backgrounds, like Odets' Hollywood or Miller's Brooklyn, which are rationalizations after the fact. Our drama has become increasingly subjective, but hates to admit it; Americans are allowed to bring the human problem on the stage only if they are willing to call it something else. And this is not difficult, for when certain liberal formulas have nowhere else to go, they can always find a home on Broadway.

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WHAT PRICE ISRAEL'S "NORMALCY"?

A Young Nation and its Ideals

ERNST SIMON

EVEN a superficial observer might notice the three traits in Israel's Jewish youth that still strike me as fundamental after twenty years of experience. Our Jewish youth here is distinguished by health, by a spirit of self-sacrifice, and, in its educated members, by a consciousness of being the heir and herald of Hebrew culture. But, while both the hasty and the long-term observer will agree as to these facts, they may evaluate them somewhat differently.

Even the concept of health, apparently so simple, has manifold aspects. One can distinguish between biological and psychological health; and health as a philosophy or way of life is still another matter, and again susceptible to different interpretations.

Biological health is unquestionably a positive value. To the newcomer from Europe, the straight, sturdy children and young people of Eretz Israel, with their fresh complexions and clear, carefree eyes, their waving hair, seem to represent a new type of Jew, and the general impression is no doubt highly favorable. The shift to physical labor, often on the land, the sense of national dignity and military responsibility—all these factors, taken together with wholesome food, have strengthened the bodies of the younger generation, who tend to be taller and stronger than their fathers. (A similar phenomenon can be observed in the second and third generation of American-born Jews).

The problem of psychological health is more complicated: it has its positive and its less positive aspects. Psychological health may be defined as a consciousness or feeling of wholeness, or as the absence of that sense of alienation which nearly always characterizes those Jews of the Diaspora who are not yet fully assimilated. The ever-recurring need to create a new balance and draw new lines of demarcation between the Jewish and non-Jewish elements in one's tradition and environment does not exist for the young Israeli Jew. It is this, added to his biological health, that gives him the single-mindedness and purposiveness that made him the outstanding worker, technician, and soldier that the last year has revealed him to be—to the surprise of the whole world, though not of those who knew him intimately.

But this advantage—which has often been defined as the abolition of hyphens, as in Jewish-American, German-Jewish, etc.—entails two possible serious disadvantages. The first arises from the fact that these healthy Israeli youths are not content only to redeem themselves, but regard themselves also as the elite, the advance guard of a people that they consider to be very sick. We all of us know from personal experience that nothing irritates an invalid more than the attentions of a person who exudes robust health; and understanding of the sick personality is espe-

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THE central ideal of Jewish youth in Israel has been, and remains, "normalcy." Its appeal is obvious: health, vigor, the saving power of earth and air, and constructive work. But there are pitfalls, too, in normalization, ERNST SIMON warns. Ahead of the new nation lies the task, he suggests, of blending the religious traditions of Judaism, the cultural traditions of Western civilization, and the passionate nationalism of Israel's younger generation into a culture fully adequate for the needs of Israel's people. Professor Simon is chairman of the department of education at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, and is the author of numerous works in German and Hebrew on philosophy, literature, and education. He was born in Berlin in 1899 and earned his doctorate at the University of Heidelberg. He wrote the article "Tomorrow's Jew in the Making," published in the July 1948 COMMENTARY. This article has been translated from the German by Ralph Manheim.

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cially rare in those who have only recently acquired biological health and are therefore prone to exaggerate its importance. Thus we have a strange dialectical paradox: the closer Israeli youth approach to psychic wholeness and a solution of their own personal Jewish problem, the harder it becomes for them to carry out their broader mission as pioneers for Jewry as a whole. This is made evident by the failure of many, though by no means all, of the Palestinian youth leaders sent out to work among Jews in Diaspora countries.

This leads us to the second possible disadvantage, which is of a far more intimate nature. Is it true that, either in concept or reality, "true" Jewishness is as exclusive as one hundred per cent Israelis are inclined to believe in their newly won self-sufficiency? Throughout Jewish history, and not merely after the loss of national independence, Judaism existed and developed in contact and interplay with the great spiritual movements abroad in the world. Israel's prophets, while they lived and prophesied almost exclusively in Eretz Israel itself, can no more be understood without the universalism of their message than without their national Messianism. This view of Judaism has been stressed by many of our finest religious spirits up to modern times, when Hermann Cohen and Judah L. Magnes, independently of one another, defined the Jewish people as a community whose form was nationality, but whose content was universalism. The question arises: to what extent does the extreme form that nationalism has assumed in modern Israel endanger the content of universalism? A glance at the state of the Maccabees will show that this question is not based on mere speculation. The Maccabean state began with a revolution of decidedly separatist character, forced on the Jews of the second century BCE by Hellenistic despotism, but it ended in an almost total assimilation to Hellenism, with which, because of unfavorable historical circumstances, the Jews had been unable originally to establish Jewish-prophetic, i.e. national-universal, relations.

This leads us to a third aspect of the seemingly simple concept of health: health as the aim and central concept of a philosophy. The ideological catchword that the Israeli youth uses for this is "normality," or, where a continuous process is meant, "normalization." This aim is organically bound up with the Zionist movement itself, which has striven to normalize the abnormal existence of the landless and dispersed Jewish people by giving it a territorial center and, as far as possible, attracting the vital elements of the Diaspora to that center. But paradoxical as it may seem, it would have been easier to carry out this plan in any other country (if another country had been available) than in the old historical homeland. The so-called "territorialists" probably had little historical instinct and even less sense of political reality, but it cannot be denied that there was a certain logic in their conception of a "normal Jewish nationalism." An empty country, without native competition and without inspiring or hampering traditions, might have provided a better laboratory for the distillation of a "normal" Jewish nation.

This ideological normalization, be it said in passing, preoccupied both Herzl, father of the new Jewish state, who left the choice of territory open, and Eliezer ben Yehuda, herald of modern, secularized Hebrew, who though living in Jerusalem favored Uganda as the national homeland. And other leaders who started out as territorialists but later became Zionists in the stricter sense, were similarly much concerned with "normalization." Such present-day exponents of territorialism as Dr. I. N. Steinberg, who feel themselves personally bound to the Jewish religious and ethical tradition, are exceptions. But they do not change the general ideological picture significantly.

However, the Zionist movement did not remain territorialist but became Palestinian. It "burdened" itself with Arab relations and with the immense weight of the historic Jewish landscape and tradition, epitomized in the name of "Jerusalem." A chemically pure normalization became impossible: the specifically Jewish problems of *our* nationalism

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emerged anew. Again the question of "Israel and the nations" had to be faced, again the power of tradition had to be dealt with. "Normalization" ceased to be a fact and became a point in a program. When health—both of the individual and of the community—has to be represented as an aim, it points to a diseased condition. The healthy man and the healthy nation take their health for granted. But the fact is that for Zionists and Israeli youth, it has became an aim. This is one more paradox, indicating how the Jewish destiny has taken hold of a great political movement that has endeavored, in an unequalled revolutionary metamorphosis, to escape it.

The contradiction in the state of mind of those who assume their normality by virtue of their existence in Israel, while at the same time they *consciously strive* for normalization, has unhappy results. Indeed, over-emphasis on normalization, in conjunction with objective difficulties, has given rise to grave tensions, often taking the form of individual and collective neuroses, not unlike those that in so many other countries today both create political conflicts and make their solution impossible. In Palestine, terrorism was one of these collective neuroses. It is quite understandable in a people that has lost more than one-third of its numbers; yet it should never have been treated homeopathically by some leaders—who ought to be physicians of their people.

Besides this internal Jewish and Israeli problem of normalization, there is a universal human problem in which the Jew participates as a man even in Israel. Is it not in the nature of man to be more than his nature, is it not his norm never to be normal? As Pascal put it, *"L'homme surpasse l'homme infiniment."* And everyone who has given any real thought to the problem of man has hit upon this strange breach in his personality: his outward vulnerability, his infinite inner possibilities. If man "is" anything at all, he is Nietzsche's "undefined animal," whose infinite scope and possibility consist precisely in the knowledge of his own temporal limitation, in the knowledge that he will die, and in his power to endure and transcend such knowledge.

His religion and his destiny have made the Jew an extreme case of this human contradiction—the more Jewish, the more extreme the case. In other words, he achieved his self-realization as a Jew not by turning away from the possibilities of man, but by radicalizing them; and thus, the more normality he achieved in his own being, the more abnormal he became, i.e., the further away from the "adjusted" and the average. Who is more Jewish than the servant of God in Isaiah, whose personal sorrow is more than any mere personal sorrow? Yet who at the same time is more typically human? But this has little in common with the "healthy normalization" that is the aim of a Jewish Israeli philosophy.

Toward the central question of Jewish nationalism there are three possible attitudes, which might be characterized as subtractive, affirmative, and additive. Some Jews fear the outward—and sometimes even the inner—dangers of normal Jewish nationalism, and therefore support the theory that the Jews are less than a nation. This is the attitude of the extreme assimilationists who formerly flourished in Germany and who today in America are still highly influential, though they may not be very numerous.

There are other "assimilationists" who affirm that Israel is a "nation like other nations," no less but also no more. This is the attitude we have just analyzed and it is dominant among the Zionists and Palestinian youth. The third attitude is in reality a synthetic modification of the other two; it regards the Jewish nation as not less but *more* than a normal nation. Thus far this notion has gained little ground among Israeli youth, but through relations with Jewish youth in and from America it may have some chance to spread.

All normal young people are endowed with a spirit of self-sacrifice, and normalization has influenced this quality in Palestinian youth too. The predisposition to self-sacrifice is bound up with the psycho-

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physical balance of forces which characterizes, one might even say defines, the time of life that we call youth. The child is deficient in the forces demanded by environmental relations and the process of growth. He needs support and help, and is willing to accept them. A similar deficiency characterizes the aged; their forces are dwindling but their needs do not decline in equal proportion. Adulthood signifies a balance between forces and needs. There is only one phase of life characterized by an excess of forces over needs and demands: and that is youth. It is distinguished by that peculiar "superabundance" of vitality that makes it the age of learning (as Rousseau discovered), which lends it the radiance and the peril of an erotic charge not yet fully channelized, and which—the principal point for our discussion—makes it a chief reservoir of energy for all historical change. Politics means—not exclusively but to a very large extent—the decision of adults in power regarding the use to be made of youth's superabundant energy and spirit of self-sacrifice.

In itself, the spirit of self-sacrifice is neither a positive nor a negative value. It can be evaluated only by examining the aims it is made to serve. But, as I have said, these aims are almost never determined by youth itself; they are determined by the adults who rule. That is why the young people are often bribed, so to speak, with ostensibly autonomous "youth movements" under youthful leaders; these satisfy the young people's erotic need for companionship and blind them to the real character of the policy they are made to serve. Sometimes, to be sure, the young darkly sense the delusory character of what has been foisted upon them, and then they try to take policy into their own hands. But it is a paradox of history that such revolts of youth are hardly ever directed against the policy that has tried to exploit them, but almost always tend to support and radicalize it. The moment in which this occurs is a moment of danger for revolutionary movements. Such a moment was at hand in Eretz Israel, where one part of self-sacrificing youth, those in the Haganah, was forced to turn against another part, which was no less self-sacrificing—the terrorist groups. But both fighting sides operated on a common ground: the spirit of self-sacrifice felt by "normal" Jewish youth. (To be sure, the psychology of the two groups was not identical, for the average Haganah man was linked to constructive work on the soil or at his work-table or his desk, while the average terrorist was a sort of professional underground fighter, but in this one crucial point it was very similar indeed.)

Now for the third trait, the consciousness of being the heirs and heralds of Jewish culture. The large majority—though not all—of Jewish children born in Palestine have Hebrew for their mother tongue; for all Israeli Jewish children it is the language of kindergarten and school. What is perhaps even more significant, it is the language of all youth groups and military organizations. Hebrew in Jewish Palestine has a positive highly charged emotional quality. To a certain extent this prevents it from being a routine, taken-for-granted language of the land, and lends to it an enormous romantic aura. The treasures of our traditional literature are open to our schoolchildren without the painstaking and terrifying labor of study that often completely distorts the beauty and content of that literature elsewhere. The Israeli child meets the Bible stories in all the powerful and natural simplicity of the language in which they were originally written, and weaves them together with his own childhood impressions of the scene—which he himself lives in—on which they were enacted. This scene and the figures that moved upon it and transformed it constitute the natural and historical atmosphere of the child and student. A similar though very much weaker immediacy of relations leads him from the Bible to its Talmudic elaborations, the Aggada and Halacha, the writings of medieval poets and thinkers, the literature of the Hebrew Enlightenment, and to the nationalists, and then to the poets and story-tellers of modern Palestine.

So far so good. Unquestionably the revi-

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talization of a culture and literature that have grown anemic was not only desirable but was absolutely necessary. The decidedly positive result, to which the last generation of Palestinian youth has contributed writers of its own—in part on an astonishingly high plane—must not deter us, however, from an investigation that may reveal certain problematic aspects belonging to it.

This is evident even in the relatively, or seemingly, simple sphere of language, as a concrete example will show. Every Israeli child knows the Hebrew word for electricity: *hashmal*. When he first runs across this word in the Bible—Ezekiel 1:4—he is exposed to a misunderstanding that would never occur to one who has not grown up in the Hebrew tongue. In the prophetic vision the word, which occurs only once in the Bible, designates the substance of a glittering effulgence. Later this was identified with amber. The use of amber in producing static electricity gave rise to the modern usage of the word. The Israeli child must in a sense travel this road of word-history backward in order to arrive at a pure understanding of the Biblical term.

Modern Hebrew has this difficulty in common with all civilized languages whose traditional sources are still studied in schools—Homer presents the same problem to the modern Greek, Chaucer a similar one to the modern Englishman or American. But in Greek and English the consequences are not nearly so ambiguous, because their separate development by every-day use has gone on uninterrupted.

To carry our illustration further: the modern usage of the word *hashmal* is technical and profane; the Biblical word is sacred. This applies not only to this word, which was chosen at random, but to nearly the whole traditional Hebrew vocabulary. Because of the comprehensive character of the ancient Scriptures, for which "religion" was no special watertight segment or compartment of life but a sanctificatory approval to all daily life, the Biblical tongue is to a very high degree applicable to profane uses. At the same time, this creates a great problem, for there is no greater metaphysical and affective contradiction than that between a "world" which is the object of sanctification, and an autonomous sphere of the "profane" that at the very least maintains itself as an independent power in the face of the sacred, and frequently attempts to transcend, penetrate, and assimilate the sacred. Where this division is expressed through diverse languages, as for example Church Latin and the national vernaculars, the spheres are far more readily differentiated than where, as in Hebrew, the secularization process takes place within the old, sacred language.

Because of the great similarity between the "profane" and "religious" languages, both find themselves beset with a problem. The religious language and its traditional literature must constantly be defended against a facile and illusory understanding that endangers its autonomy and threatens to secularize it. This is a pedagogic problem of the first order, which Martin Buber and Franz Rosenzweig had to keep in mind even in translating the Scriptures into German. Likewise the profane language is no less endangered by the stylistic values of religious usage; there is a constant temptation to express oneself in a pseudo-religious manner in order to "speak a beautiful Hebrew." Thus Bialik in his translation of Schiller's *Wilhelm Tell* translated as "God" those neutral circumlocutions for the godhead, such as *Schicksal* (fate), etc., that German idealists favored; and this is by no means an indication of religiosity on his part, but merely of the character of the Hebrew language. Or to give another less striking, but for that very reason more typical, example: the consciously secular Jewish historian Dubnow gave to his chief work the German title *Weltgeschichte des jüdischen Volkes* in order to indicate its scope in space and time; the Hebrew translator, though to be sure with Dubnow's approval, turned this into a *History of the Eternal People,* which is excellent Hebrew but, with its religious implications, the worst conceivable title for the work in question.

Similarly this religious quality of Hebrew may possibly, some think, lend a kind of

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grandiose, heroic aura of the supra-rational, the divinely sanctioned, to political speech in Israel, which does not properly belong to it, and which in an intensely nationalistic milieu might have its dangers. On the other hand, religious words have become so interwoven a part of "good Hebrew style" that they make any precise discussion of religion in its own appropriate terms extremely difficult for those who speak and write Hebrew. Paradoxically, to make such a discussion possible, it would be first necessary to create a profane and consciously unpoetic Hebrew language, sharply distinguished from the religious tongue in its present aesthetic perversion for non-religious uses.

THE same problems as appear in the linguistic field are even more evident in cultural attitudes. What is the Bible? The "Book of God's battle," in which Buber and Rosenzweig rediscovered and reformulated such basic religious categories as Creation, Revelation, and Salvation? Or is it an arsenal of Hebrew philology, Palestinian archaeology, the early history of the Jewish people and the laws of social justice? Or is it all of these? Even those relatively few who are still able to take so comprehensive a view cannot agree where the accent belongs. Is it a product of the spirit of the people, as Ahad Ha'am believed, or did it create the spirit of the people, as the believer in Revelation thinks to be the case? Should it be taught as it is written or, even to those of school age, in the light of the real or alleged findings of modern Biblical criticism? Does its ethos—and its lesson for us—reside in the Prophets' attack on narrow nationalism and opportunistic *Realpolitik*? Or must the Bible, on the contrary, be "purged" of the prophetic teachings, which are after all nothing but an "ideological superstructure" set up in times of national defeat and decay, and which, in the present era of reconstruction, can and must be torn down in order to free the original heroic epos, the Jewish Nibelungenlied as it were, from theological rubble?

And what is Jewish history? Does it speak essentially of "suffering and books" as formulated by Leopold Zunz and written by Heinrich Graetz, is it a martyrology and history of literature, or is it the chronicle of a national community with many and shifting centers, sometimes in Palestine and more often in the Diaspora, as Simon Dubnow made it? Or were all these centers, as in the view of Klausner and Dünaburg, merely episodes of one great theme: the longing for Zion, the unbroken bond between the one country and the one people, always culminating in rare but decisive wedding feasts, in which the two come together, in which the people tills the land and builds its state?

Or is this entire separation of motifs false and misleading, since it is precisely the men of suffering and the authors of the great books who often, though not always, have preserved and augmented the idea of Salvation, who in the religious laws of the Talmud found a mystical mode of life, and in the Cabala the original Jewish answer to the exile from Spain, as Baer and Scholem of the Hebrew University have taught us? What element of such learned discussions as these at our Hebrew University, we must ask, actually reaches the Jewish youth, what do they assimilate, as students from their teachers, in the youth organizations? The answer to this question is crucial for determining the content of that Hebrew Jewish culture whose standard-bearers Israeli youth rightly feel themselves to be.

EVEN without statistics and questionnaires —whose value I do not wish to underestimate—my experience tells me that for the overwhelming majority of Jewish youth in Israel the Bible is a book of the struggles of the Jewish people and not the book of God's battles. To these young people, Jewish history is by and large intelligible only in the rare instances where it resembles the history of "normal" peoples, above all in the episodes relating to the kingdom of the Second Temple, while the specifically *Jewish* character of its other epochs is alien to them. Consequently, they tend to prefer the history of non-Jewish peoples to that of the Jews: not

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because they particularly love these peoples, but because they offer a more immediately intelligible kind of history, featured by state power, wars, and revolutions. On the other hand, with a healthy instinct, the young Palestinians distrust the occasional "pedagogic" attempts to falsify and "normalize" the central episodes of Jewish history into a national, heroic history. Parenthetically, this attempt, if successful, would make Zionism superfluous.

A similar paradoxical reversal of interest occurs in choosing between original Hebrew literature and translations from foreign languages for one's reading. The post-Biblical Hebrew and Aramaic literature of the Mishna and Talmud is, because of its predominantly religious, casuistical, and moral character, not especially popular, and indeed its scholastic modes of thought are not readily accessible to modern young people, whose formal education is built upon mathematics and the natural sciences—this is, of course, not a specifically Palestinian circumstance, but prevails among the Jewish youth of the whole world. The only difference is that medieval Hebrew literature plays a larger part in the educational scheme of Israel than in that of Jews of other countries.

Moreover, strange to say, the indifference of young Israelis to old Jewish culture—despite their formal mastery of its language—extends, though in a much more attenuated form, even to modern Hebrew literature. The great epic writers who dealt with the Jewish small town, from Mendele Mocher Sforim, with his acrid self-criticism, to Agnon, with his ironic dialectical idyll, enjoy little real popularity. Their subject matter and problems are too far removed from the Israeli youth of today, although—or perhaps because—these works deal with the environment of their own fathers or grandfathers.

On the other hand, works dealing with specifically Palestinian themes and the problems of modern youth are only gradually achieving that quality which the rather exacting Israeli young people demand. Often they are compelled to choose between a great literature that is remote, and trivial works closer to their own concerns. From this dilemma they escape by going to foreign books, either in English or in Hebrew translation. Only thus can they open a window on the outside world and gain an understanding of the general problems of modern youth. In itself this is unquestionably valuable and represents a basis for the broadening of a Jewish nationalism that is often too narrow. But we may regret that this understanding is often acquired to the detriment of specifically Jewish cultural values.

The questions we have thus far dealt with culminate in one central problem: what is happening in Israel to traditional Jewish culture, which was unquestionably of religious character, during a process of transformation that is largely depriving it of this character? Here we can only formulate the problem, we cannot answer it.

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THOMAS MANN'S "DOCTOR FAUSTUS"

"Terminal Work" of an Art Form and an Era

ERICH KAHLER

THE great novels of the 20th century, its essential books, are without exception *terminal* books, apotheoses of the narrative form. Proust's *À la recherche du temps perdu,* Gide's *Faux-Monnayeurs,* Joyce's *Ulysses,* Kafka's great parables, Musil's *Mann ohne Eigenschaften,* Broch's *Das Tod Vergils,* Sartre's *Nausée,* Camus' *Étranger*—each, in theme, is an inventory of our spiritual holdings, a moral, aesthetic, and metaphysical reckoning-up of our human estate; some of them, in form, carry abstraction to a point beyond which further evolution seems impossible. A deep, ultimate seriousness runs through them all, a seriousness which their ever-present irony increases rather than diminishes. Indeed, what is irony but the transcendence of self, a chain reaction of transcendence? Today, the spiritual, the artistic, the human itself balances on the highest peak of danger, "exposed on the mountains of the heart." So much has called it into question—how could it help questioning itself?

And indeed art has come to question its own existence—cannot escape doing so. The last veils of fiction, the last pretense of a divine plaything, are gone; the real thing invades the work of art; bare reality, of more dimensions than the individual artist can cope with, decomposes and shatters the novel. How can the artist hope to reach the central, innermost condition of our world—which is his ultimate function—without going into its formidable factual and technical processes? How can he hope to master its growing complexity without a corresponding increase in density and abstractness of presentation, without speculative analysis and exegesis?

Thus the story loses its value as a special event and becomes a parable of the human condition; the individual character becomes a type, the symbol a model. The artist today must load the tangible with so many levels of meaning that the complete work really becomes an orchestral score requiring a conductor—and indeed have single works of art ever before enlisted so many program notes and interpretations?

"When I hear about hearing . . ." says Adrian Leverkühn in *Doctor Faustus.* "When I read about reading . . ." would be a legitimate paraphrase: the reader cannot "follow" the theme without going one level of abstraction beyond it to embrace the entire structure, for the structure has in fact become the theme—the "what" ends up as the "how."

The traditional art forms have grown problematic through external, social, and cultural evolution, as well as through internal evolution, evolution of technique; art has become its own subject matter. And since the function of the artist and the intellectual

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FEW books have offered such a challenge to America's critics and other readers as Thomas Mann's recently published *Doctor Faustus,* which marks the climax of one of the great literary careers of our age—a career possibly as important and instructive as the works of art it produced. ERICH KAHLER here analyzes *Doctor Faustus* in relationship to Thomas Mann's entire life and work and to the cultural and anti-cultural trends of the past decades. Dr. Kahler has published six books, among them: *Israel Among the Nations* (1936), *The German Character in European History* (1937), and *Man the Measure: A New Approach to History* (1943). Born in Prague in 1885, he studied and lectured at various German universities before coming to this country in 1938. At present he is professor at Cornell University and a member of the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton. Dr. Kahler's article has been translated from the German by Francis C. Golffing.

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has been called into question by the moral and social events of our epoch, the artist himself is drawn into a kind of polyphonic soliloquy on his role in our world.

It is just here that we have the content of Thomas Mann's entire work, which as a whole, bears the distinguishing traits of the great terminal books of our epoch. But in his work the terminal quality does not appear all at once; it may be watched as a process, evolving through decades.

THOMAS MANN's development as a novelist comprises the whole development of modern narrative prose. He began his career with a book that, though marked by the destiny of modern art, still resembled the traditional realistic novel. Indeed, he has gone on using the comfortably circumstantial, digressive manner of the 19th-century novel right up into the latest, "structuralist" stages of his work—even in this last summing-up, his *Faust*. Yet what a long way from *Buddenbrooks* to *Doctor Faustus*. All that has happened to us, to the world, to art, during the last half-century, can be read in the course of this journey.

Mann's whole *oeuvre*, we have said, must be regarded as a single, consistent creation because, throughout, there may be felt in it an unconscious or semi-conscious tendency toward a structural unity of the whole. It is a dynamic macrocosm, a more and more dense and comprehensive complex of developing motifs, exhibiting as a whole a fugal character such as is otherwise found only in single novels or works of art. Just as each work gains increasing symbolic richness by the use and intensification of a leitmotif and the fusing of several leitmotifs, so on a larger scale the work as a whole exhibits the progressive exfoliation and metamorphosis of one single, all-pervasive theme. Mann himself, in his autobiographical sketch, has pointed, not without surprise, to the relationships within the magic square: *Buddenbrooks, Tonio Kröger, The Magic Mountain*, and *Death in Venice*. Yet exact correspondences of this sort are to be found throughout his entire work.

The lifelong central theme of Mann's books has been an inquiry into the function of art and the artist, of culture and the intellectual in modern society. This cluster of problems had its origin in the 19th century, rising out of the Industrial Revolution and the political changes attendant on it, out of the mechanization, collectivization, standardization of our world, and the increasing alienation of the artist from his society.

At first the artist took a stand for threatened culture: defensively in romanticism and aestheticism; aggressively in dandyism and insolent eccentricity. But gradually, almost insensibly, his attitude began to change: his own position, the nature of art and culture themselves, became problematic to him.

It was not that his attitude toward bourgeois society changed, but that he no longer supported culture unequivocally. Instead he began to lean more and more toward a new barbarism.

Even before Nietzsche we see signs of such a development. Leconte de Lisle wrote *Poèmes Barbares*, Théophile Gautier proclaimed: *"La barbarie vaut mieux que la platitude."* With Nietzsche the problem becomes broadly apparent, and later developments branch out in many directions. One way leads directly through the brash extremism of the Futurists, of Spengler, Klages, and Jünger, to the *trahison des clercs;* another leads to the savagely defiant vagrancy of Knut Hamsun and D. H. Lawrence's glorification of the vital urges; a third leads to the ambivalent scepticism in matters cultural of tired aristocrats such as Hermann Bang and Eduard Keyserling; the last and most far-reaching way leads to the bold investigations of the contemporary novel.

THOMAS MANN had an initial advantage as compared with other great novelists of his generation, an advantage without which he could not have covered the vast distance between realism and structuralism. The problem fundamental to the modern novel—the role of the intellectual within his society, a problem that, in the last analysis,

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is the problem of man generally, of the individual surviving precariously in a technological, collective, incommensurate world—was not a problem Mann had to realize and experience intellectually; it was given to him in his cradle as his primary experience of himself. He himself *was* the problem, by virtue of the contrasts of his origin, the conjunction of the bourgeois and the artistic. From childhood he bore within himself that tension which impels the basic theme of our era.

His earliest stories introduce this theme. They are all studies of outcasts: the misshapen or unfortunate, like little Herr Friedemann, the lawyer Jacoby (*Little Lizzie*), Tobias Mindernickel, Lobgott Piepsam (*The Way to the Churchyard*); the invalid, like Albrecht van der Qualen (*The Wardrobe*); the man set apart by religious exaltation, like the monk Hieronymus (*Gladius Dei*), the archetype of Savonarola (*Fiorenza*); and already, as early as *The Dilettante* and Spinell (*Tristan*), the outcast as literary man, the would-be-artist in his illegitimate, tragi-comic opposition to life and to the social norm. Incidentally, in both *The Wardrobe* and *Tristan* we find the germ of the motif of *The Magic Mountain*: the peculiar removal from life, the isolation and insulation that goes with illness and the atmosphere of healing. The sanitarium in *Tristan* almost strikes us as a sketch for the one in the *Magic Mountain*. Even so early as this Thomas Mann was in possession of the outlines of a work that was to be precipitated by an entirely different, unforeseeable experience, his sojourn at Davos.

These stories, as well as *Buddenbrooks*, are all what is commonly called realistic fiction. They are realistic in a cruel, often painful way that points to the influence of the great Russian novelists; they seem to result from a deliberate discipline in sustaining with exact imagination the minutest circumstances of human suffering, perverted emotion, painful embarrassment. But—and this is a wholly modern aspect of Mann's style, distinguishing it from that of the Russian novelists—all these eccentric facts have been pushed to an extreme of precision, a point of caricature, where they turn into transcendent ironies. The experience of reality has become superintensive, ironically intensive. At the same time this irony has the property of creating symbols. A perfect example is the situation in *The Way to the Churchyard*: the contentious drunkard, Piepsam, tries to push the blond, young cyclist (life) from his bicycle. Later examples are Tonio Kröger in the *Moulinet des Dames;* the carious teeth of the Buddenbrooks and the consul's collapse head-first into the gutter; Mario and the magician; and so forth. These are all extreme, vicious, ironic contrasts, and their extreme irony is what makes them symbolic. They have their root in an archetypal conflict, the ironic constitution of the artist himself.

THE style of every genuine artist is originally a style of personal experience; this is true of Thomas Mann in a very special sense. There is hardly another literary *oeuvre* that bears so clear an autobiographical stamp. Mann himself has told us, for instance, in his autobiographical sketch, that every single detail in *Death in Venice* is authentic, none of it fictitious. All that happens to any individual endowed with a truly personal style of experience seems to converge into an organic system of symbols and to assume an apparently inevitable relationship to his nature. This phenomenon is particularly marked in Thomas Mann, whose fundamental problem was shaped by the circumstances of his birth. Since he experiences everything under the sign of the primary tension of his being, the raw material of life almost immediately assumes for him a symbolic character. The reciprocal irony of his psychological situation, and that further irony which transcends it, sharpen the symbolism still more. This peculiar disposition, this instinctive tendency to organize all experience symbolically, seems to account for the unique organic inter-relatedness, the fugal character of Mann's entire work.

Even the works of his early, realistic period evidence a very personal system of

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symbolic coordinates, an irony that creates distance and transcendence. Both in *Buddenbrooks* and in *Tonio Kröger,* the fundamental, personal problem is developed almost autobiographically, in the first, genealogically, from the bourgeois standpoint, in the second, individually, from the standpoint of the artist. Bourgeois and artist, each turns his gaze and inclination toward his counterpart: there is an exact correspondence between the consul Thomas Buddenbrook, who finds solace in Schopenhauer, and Tonio Kröger, with his nostalgia for the normal, blond, and respectable.

Already culture and intellect are represented as decadence, love is associated with decline; the artist is seen as a pariah from the start, iridescent with suspect hues, shading into the daemon, the invalid, the social outcast, the adventurer, the criminal; already he is stranded in the ironic situation of expressing a life he himself is unable to live. And already the multiple variations the basic theme is to undergo in the later books become discernible. Tonio Kröger's identification, somehow felt by him to be legitimate, with the swindler, foreshadows Felix Krull, swindler-by-extravagance-of-fantasy, and the blasphemous hoax of the paraphrase of *Dichtung und Wahrheit* in Krull's diary. A single metaphor of Tonio's ("mufti's no use . . .") furnishes the germ of *Royal Highness,* the outcast "upward," the sublime clown who keeps directing a performance that is being enacted without him.

From here on the motifs split and ramify and re-join, form new variations, change keys. In *Death in Venice* the conflict that had earlier appeared as an external friction between art and life is internalized; it is within the artist, indeed, within art itself: a conflict between daemon and discipline. Discipline is what preserves the artist, what justifies art and keeps it in the framework of social responsibility. Once discipline slackens, the daemon, the *eros,* breaks loose, and in the maelstrom of debauchery both art and artist are swept into sickness and death. The active counterpart of the passive Aschenbach is the magician Cipolla (*Mario and the Magician*), another outcast, deformed, but one who compensates and overcompensates his deformity—a deeper image of the artist seen as the irresponsible puppeteer of souls who uses his magic to cast people into the most unholy ecstasies. At this point the artist passes over into the demagogue, the dictator. He too is swept into perdition by his daemon, but not because of mere passivity but because of *hubris:* unlike Aschenbach, Cipolla does not let himself go or drift, but on the contrary exercises all his powers. He is a virtuoso of the will, a fiend for the sheer joy of conquest. He does not yield to his daemon but allies himself with it, indeed identifies himself with it, challenges it, incites it.

The Magic Mountain projects Aschenbach's psychic split into the world at large. The powers of the psyche widen out into whole landscapes. Magic expands into the magic mountain, into the sphere of an intellectual, morbid, irresponsible dissociation from life, where culture and nursing merge, and where the dissolution of dying overintensifies the stimuli of life. Discipline becomes the valley of duties, of normal, responsible action. But these too—the duties, the responsibilities, the active, normal life—lead into war and final collapse.

Here we come upon an alteration in the fundamental motif. The normality of the normal is no longer secure. Before this, Mann's work had been dedicated to the problem of life's boundaries: by means of his various outcasts he had delimited an area of healthy, normal, insouciant life. Now he discovers signs of decay on both sides of the boundary—in the world of action as well as up there on the magic mountain. Dying is part of living as living is part of dying.

The ambivalence, the paradox of all living things is at last revealed. *The Magic Mountain* opens out into an unanswered question: What *is* life anyway? What is normal? What is man and where does he stand? What is the norm of man and his measure? Goethe's question is raised once more (in a world terribly changed)—the

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question of *Tasso*, of *Iphigenie*, of the *Elective Affinities*, of *Faust*. . . .

IN ALL of Thomas Mann's books after *The Magic Mountain*, there runs through the persistent motif of conflict between the abnormal and the supposedly normal, an anxious question as to the being and becoming of man. The *Joseph* novels open up the remotest layers of our mythical, totemistic past, which are at the same time the darkest layers of our psyche, the underworld of savage urges, lying ever in wait within us. Joseph rises out of these regions in a long, precarious process of sublimation, and there rises with him, within him, the sublimated, spiritualized God-image—he being the prefiguration of Jesus. He too bears a stigma from the beginning, the stigma of Grace. Grace again is full of abysses and wiles, and great discipline is required of its possessor. But, for one supreme moment, the norm seems to have shifted to spiritual man. For one moment. Joseph's counterpart was to appear, the Antichrist, the man stigmatized by the curse of spirit: Faustus.

The presentation of the Apollonian genius in *Lotte in Weimar* forms the transition. The image of Goethe emerges intact, "great, serene, and wise," as "a sacrifice—and bringer of sacrifice"; genius is preserved as an object of our reverence, sublimated as "simply the face of man." All this is still in the vein of Joseph. But behind it we see the cost, the full measure of Goethe's, of the artist's sacrifice: not only the mastering of a world increasingly packed with factual material, of days crowded with labor, and of a refractory audience, but also the ruining of many people, among them those closest to him, and the abandoning of his own everyday humanity. Discipline once more, distance, alienation, and the chill of an uncanny, transcendent irony. This brings us to Faustus, who is entirely governed by this coldness.

I have called *Faustus* the final chapter of a terminal *oeuvre*.

To start with, it gathers together all the variations and filiations of the fundamental motif, relates them in a new way, tests one against the other, and reduces them all in magnificent concentration to the old dominant theme. For what else is this Faustus but a cosmic Tonio Kröger, a Tonio Kröger expanded to his ultimate epochal and human significance? Faustus represents the extreme, the most mature fruit of the arch-problem, the arch-experience. The psychological split is portrayed through two characters: Adrian Leverkühn and Serenus Zeitblom—the intellectual adventurer and the "healthy" bourgeois.

The character who lives a normal life writes the biography of the one who, in the simple, human sense, is not allowed to have a life. In Adrian, Tonio Kröger's primary alienation from life, his ironic detachment from it, is pushed to its metaphysical limits. Aschenbach's daemon, which operates through love and sickness, and Cipolla's daemon, which operates more subjectively as *hubris* and defiant self-aggrandizement, are united in Adrian's devil. Daemon and discipline are no longer seen as opposites, but discipline comes to serve the daemon. Between daemon and discipline, impulse and reason, death and life, there goes on the same mystical dialectic, the same reciprocal intensification that we found in *The Magic Mountain*. Besides, Adrian is really Joseph's counterpart, his spiritual kin. Adrian's elevation leads to perdition, whereas the "Pit" leads Joseph to glory; the sublimation which in Joseph's case is an act of God, in Adrian's case is an act of the Devil. From a different point of view Adrian, the Dionysian musical genius, is a counterpart of Goethe, the Apollonian, visual genius. Here too the opposites betray affinity, for both are in each: in Goethe the dark, romantic, Faustian impulse; in Adrian the lucid, visual, rational grasp of the whole. But in the last analysis the blessing and the curse seem to be contained in the contrast between word and sound, poetry and music.

FAUSTUS is also a terminal book in point of style, the ultimate precipitation of Thomas Mann's artistic discipline. I have already intimated how this discipline, which is of

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North German, Hanseatic, Prussian provenance, developed through artistic filiations and the irony of an inner tension into a symbol-creating property. Discipline in art must necessarily express itself in a sharpened sense of form, an intensive striving for organic wholeness, and that means to see things symbolically.

From without, from Richard Wagner and Tolstoy, came the suggestion of the leitmotif, which in *Tonio Kröger* already is transferred from characters to ideas. Mann tells us that in *Tonio Kröger* he for the first time conceived of narrative composition as a texture of ideas woven of various themes, as a musical nexus—his affinity to music was very strong from the outset. Out of such a musical conception grows the fugal character of the later works and of his *oeuvre* as a whole.

But *Faustus* can hardly be compared any longer to a fugue; it is almost—if we may apply musical terms to a literary composition—what Adrian calls a "strict movement." It is a structure in which each detail has an exact symbolic reference, a structure of utter complexity, in which not only the various dimensions and layers, but within these each sub-motif and minor variation, is related to the rest and back to the fundamental motif. In spite of the semblance of ease in both invention and narrative, nothing here is accidental, nothing stands for itself alone; everything refers to everything else, each detail is determined by the whole. Correspondences run backwards and forwards, between beginning and end, upper and lower levels, in a kind of labyrinthine mathematics. From Buchel to Pfeiffering; from the father's "speculating on the elements" to the son's *Symphonia Cosmologica* and his fantastic excursions into the galactic and submarine spheres; from his actual mother Elsbeth to Mother Manardi and the ultimate mother Schweigestill; from Stallhanne to the maid Walpurgis; and from the laughing dog Suso, through the black swine at the entrance of the devil-house in Palestrina, to the dog Kaschperl (one of the devil's nicknames); from the dog's laugh to Adrian's bent for laughter and the tendency of his music to parody and "sardonic deviltry"; from the clear-wing moth to the whore; from the "greedy drop" and the osmotic, heliotropic pseudo-creatures to the pathological lumbar migrations of the spirochetes and to the mannikins of the *Gesta Romanorum;* from Dürer's "Apocalypse" to Kleist's *Puppet Show;* from the destiny of Adrian's doctors to that of the Rogge sisters; and from the divines of Halle to the intellectuals of Munich who smirk at the bankruptcy of the intellect—among all these a net of converging relationships is woven, and one rational and daemonic system contains them all. Even the most casual incident has its place: an emerald ring is engraved with a plumed serpent whose tongue is feathered like an arrow; an outing into the Bavarian mountains leads to Linderhof, the castle of a mad, possessed king.

The great drama of Tonio Kröger as Faustus, the drama of modern art and Germany, mirrored by the humble scribe Serenus—the impotent subject and onlooker—truly images the deeply involved Thomas Mann, ever present in the background. It is enacted simultaneously on all levels, no less in the theoretical discussions and spiritual ventures of musical technique than in syphilis, murder, and madness. The same disquieting suspense informs the descriptions of musical scores and the biographical sections; indeed the climactic boldness of the musical compositions comes to stand for the biographical climax.

WE NEED not be surprised if readers shake their heads over the minute descriptions of a kind of music that has never been written and perhaps never could be written. People will ask: Is this necessary? Is this possible? It was necessary, and it has been done. It is both legitimate and necessary. A reader who wishes to be spared the reading of the theoretical discussions and technical details may as well spare himself the reading of the book altogether; there is no other way of penetrating to its innermost meaning. The time is past when writers could give credibility to artist-characters by letting them

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work for years at some monumental literary idea in color or sound and then having them perorate about the work, as Hauptmann and even Ibsen did with their artist-characters. While this procedure has always been false and threadbare, today it has become quite impossible. The progression of man today, the progression of mind, is through technical processes, and it is through them that we must seek it and understand it.

Thus the channelling of events through technical processes is not a sign of weakness or arbitrariness, not mere caprice, but an imperative requirement of the total structure giving the literary work its power of persuasion. For at the center of this book lies the problem of the destiny of artistic genius and of art itself.

But what happens in and to Adrian comprises not only the fate of modern art and the intellectual; it comprises also the tragedy of Germany that is enacted in the background, the transgression of the German character, of which Adrian partakes; it comprises the general crisis of our world. The narrative takes place within three overlapping time-spans: the time-span of Adrian, 1885 to 1941, which is extended backwards into the historical depths of medieval Germany and the German Reformation by means of the spiritual climate of Kaisersaschern where Adrian spent his childhood and by means of the humanistic-pietistic university town of Halle where he studied; the time-span of the Third Reich, whose period of incubation coincides with Adrian's prime, and whose triumph and fall Zeitblom witnesses with horror even as he writes the story of Adrian's life; finally, our own epoch, which has given birth to the crisis of modern art and of the intellectual, and which is continuing even as we read.

All these time-strata are not only homologous but also variously interconnected. Thus the chronicle of German political events, inserted at intervals by Zeitblom into his biography of Adrian, is sometimes cross-connected with that biography, as in the discussions of the students at Halle and of the Munich intellectuals, or in the appearance of the impresario Fitelberg, who confronts Germanism with Judaism.

At the same time the book is interwoven with strands of Thomas Mann's personal history; there are long passages that are more nakedly autobiographical than any other writing by this author, who throughout his career has drawn so largely on his own life. Kaisersaschern, its form and atmosphere, the "witches" in its streets, point toward Mann's native city, Lübeck; Palestrina is the place where, under virtually identical circumstances, Thomas Mann wrote his *Buddenbrooks*. Pfeiffering and Munich both evoke familiar scenes. Mann's family, his friends and acquaintances have been introduced into the story barely disguised, in some cases without change of name, in the fashion of montage.

This bold and rather disturbing procedure —apart from the lure and significance of parody—has the character of a radical confession of self. It is as though Thomas Mann wished to emphasize that he belongs in the story, is a part of it, that the destinies of Leverkühn and Zeitblom as well as of Germany, the intellectual, and modern art, deeply involve him. This *pro domo* applies not only to the author but also to the work. The compulsive tendency toward irony and parody in Adrian's creation; his rejection of make-believe and the "divine game" which leads to the self-abolition of art; the "never-relaxed, perilous playing of art on the edge of impossibility"; its "pilgrimage on peas"; its "strict counterpoint"; "the highest and strictness organization, a planetary, cosmic norm"; the "universal unity of dimensions"; the "calculation raised to mystery"; and finally the "thrust from intellectual coldness into the adventure of new feeling," the desire for "an art without suffering, psychologically sound, far from solemn, serenely intimate," "an art on terms of closest familiarity with mankind," and the conviction that the spirit "even in its most daring sallies, researches, and ventures, which seem to remove it from the common taste, can nevertheless count on serving humanity, and, in the end, in a very

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roundabout way, even actual people. . . ."—all this is the self-projection not only of the author, it is the self-projection and self-reflection of the book. If we listen closely we may even catch in the cruel narrative that *vibrato* of the voice attributed to Adrian when he speaks with a half-modest, half-haughty casualness of the artist's ultimate familiarity with mankind.

It is Serenus Zeitblom who serves to strengthen confessional to the point of self-interpretation. True, he is the author's other half, the Overbeck of the Nietzschean Adrian, a second-remove ironic reflection of the normal on the abnormal, but his true function goes far beyond all this. He is the mediator between the various spheres, not only between Adrian and life, but also between the book and the world. He is a loose personification of the author's symbolic conscience, the commentator whose fears and forebodings, queries and meditations furnish the necessary cross-references—perhaps too many and too explicit for the acute reader, yet still hardly enough for those obtuse to symbolism. It is he who provides the additional experience of the German tragedy and integrates it with the rest; who, with his numerous reservations and confidences, makes the highly wrought craftsmanship seem easy and unobtrusive, and effects the transition to human emotion.

The creation of this character enabled Thomas Mann to maintain his highly synthetic Adrian, this cosmic figure, within the context of humanity, to make of him a real and moving character, though this is accomplished a little at the expense of Zeitblom, who often feels and expresses things that are actually outside his pale. However, the author has tried in advance to give psychological credibility to these deviations—and, indeed, man is an unstable, vibrant substance whose hidden depths may be stirred to unforeseeable effects by certain crises and stimuli. Furthermore, in this book psychology no longer counts. Zeitblom is a voice, ultimately the author's voice: "I am too close to my subject . . . but when things become serious art is left behind. . . ." Of course this itself is artifice, but it passes over into truth.

This monumental undertaking is terminal also in that it truly represents the contemporary version of the Faust problem. Valéry's *Faust,* which plays with very similar ideas, is but a fascinating existentialist idyll compared with this. Thomas Mann brings this representative symbol, not only of German but of Western culture, up to date. He treats it with finality, secularizing it and its daemon, and integrating it in a purely mundane cosmos. Redemption here has become synonymous with integration. This means that the Faustian drama is revealed as the dialectical predicament of every creature, the inborn paradox of life.

This process permeates all levels of the book. Adrian's Faustian character is constitutional. The daemon resides *within him* from the start, in his migraine, in his enormous intelligence which rapidly assimilates all that can be known. Thence ennui, the challenge to the ever more sublime, ironic transcendence, risibility, and a coldness both somber and blasé. The daemon also surrounds him, in the father who "speculates on the elements," in the medieval German climate of Kaisersaschern, in the latent polyphony of the vast collection of musical instruments in his uncle's warehouse and the growing lure of the mathematical magic of music. The genius of the stammering organist Kretschmar and the example of Beethoven carry him further, further still the theological studies at Halle, which Adrian chooses partly out of ascetic conceit, partly as a supreme feat of self-mastery, a braving of the highest powers.

For theology is a highly charged, daemoniac field of force. It survives in our modern world as a last island of medieval spirituality, a twilight area of magical dialectics and dialectical magic. This accounts for its deep affinity with mathematico-magical music. The daemon takes on greater reality in two professors of divinity, Kumpf and Schleppfuss. The baroque and blustering Kumpf, after the manner of Luther,

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throws bread rolls at the devil lurking in the corner of his room. But Schleppfuss, who proves by slippery, keen logic the interdependence of good and evil and the verity of witchcraft, represents, as his appearance and name indicate, the Evil One himself.

In Leipzig, whither Adrian goes later to pursue his musical studies—the attraction of music proving more concrete and immediate—the daemon finally assumes an active and decisive role and starts intervening, from within as well as from without. Adrian's proud superiority, his sensitive intellectuality and primal alienation are associated with an extreme chastity, a chastity more innocent because more naive than the pious and shrewd chastity of Joseph. It contains both a touching childlikeness and an element of cold pride.

It is just this kind of rarefied innocence that invites the deepest humiliation by sex and a consequent involvement in guilt. Indeed this presumptuous intellectuality, this ironic transcendence, constitutes in itself the Fall. The porter in Leipzig who guides Adrian to a brothel instead of a restaurant is merely an instrument of the inner daemon. Love flares up at the most casual physical contact, the purest love—with a whore, love returned even from the swamp, and this love, love from the first closed to the genius, contains the poison, the demoniac involvement, the Mephistophelian pact—that in reality was concluded from birth.

Original Sin has its way; the love-poison is consumed, consciously, despite all warnings. The pact is sealed, partly out of a genuine commitment to love, partly out of proud defiance, the innate urge to self-enhancement, to the supreme act of challenge. This monstrous union of the highest with the lowest, the most solitary with the most promiscuous, of genius with *vulgus*, this union—fulfilment and treason in one—constitutes one of the most moving love stories in world literature. It also contains in germ the manifold meaning of this powerful book.

From here on tragedy takes its predestined course. The wanton, ghastly dialogue with the Devil in Palestrina, while ostensibly the center of the book, only expresses what has been clear from the beginning: "Thou shalt not love."

And another thing it makes utterly clear is the primary determinance, the biological conditioning of the spiritual drama. "You see me," says the Devil, "therefore I exist for you. Is it worth while asking whether I really exist? Is not that which acts actual? Is truth not that which is felt and experienced?" Thus hallucination and reality have equal validity, and the fellow lolling on the sofa speaks both from within and from without. The coldness that emanates from him is nothing else than the reflection of the spiritual coldness of Adrian, of that white heat that feels like ice to the touch; and the Mephistophelian wit is nothing else than Adrian's own irony. It is the same with all subsequent events: the ruin of the amorous friend whom Adrian, at once bashful and diabolic, sends as his suitor to the girl they both love; the girl's recoil; and, in his house, the death of his little nephew, the dearest of all to him, the last, tenderest Eros; set over against these, the spiritual closeness of the woman who instinctively keeps herself at a distance, whom he never sees—concord only between strangers: it is all emanated by force of that inner magic in a person which has the property of creating destiny all around itself.

Adrian's Faustian drama is set entirely within the being of spiritual man. The old cosmic drama between Heaven and Hell has been transferred into the human heart. Even the voyages into the stellar system and the submarine world are phantasmagoria nourished by science. The theological conflict is secularized; God and the Devil are secularized and made to dwell in a single body.

How naively chaste, how allegorically pure was Goethe's tragedy by comparison! There the theological element pervaded the whole cosmic scene, good and evil were neatly separated, and man was endowed with free choice. This contemporary *Faustus* is likewise full of theology, but theology has

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become a small, atavistic residue, a medieval remnant, revealed as a deeply suspect region where God and Devil fluidly merge, are mutually dependent, where the good is a *fleur du mal* and vice versa.

The Faustian man has stepped over into the secular realm of art, and his fate becomes the very fate of modern art, the fate of the alien intellectual in our mechanized world. His fate is inherent in his intellectuality and insofar as he is what he is, and does not deny himself, he has no longer any choice. In his very attempt to realize what is creatively true he finds himself today, together with art, together with all that is essentially human, in a diabolical plight, in the state of alienation, of the Fall—the Fall by rising, by ironic transcendence. What is good, what is bad? Sound or sick? What is innocence, if the purest—the spirit—is sin? Where lies the norm? All this has become difficult to resolve. Concepts and values are no longer immune, but have become tainted by each other.

Thus the drama is reduced to a point; event becomes stasis, becomes existence. Life's ambiguity, life's paradox, is revealed. The Devil resides in God and God in the Devil. Sublimest chastity becomes the easiest prey of the whore.

The German character, "threatened with being wrapt up in itself like a cocoon," with "the poison of solitude," beset with longings, with the urge to break into the world, is beguiled into a grab for world power that brings it nothing but the world's hatred, and suffering. The nation whose power of abstraction is the highest, whose spirituality is the most perfectly and perilously detached, the nation of Kant, Schiller, Hölderlin, plunges ahead of the rest into a sub-animal condition. This is the nation that has created the model of a modern secularized hell, where the incredible actually happens, "without any accounting," in sound-proof cellars, where torment and lust are commingled.

And what of modern art? What of this terminal book, this extreme document? Do we not find the same symptoms here? Magic has developed into the strictest structural norm, and the strictest norm—in science, too—leads back into magic. Ultimate irony, the chain reaction of transcendence, mixes with the elements and becomes deadly serious. From the furthest, cosmic, objectivity we are thrust into utter subjectivity, the confessional.

In paradoxes such as these, indeed throughout the crisis of our age, we sense the motif of Kleist's *Puppet Show*: "Thus once again we must eat of the Tree of Knowledge in order to fall back into the state of innocence." The entire effort, the supreme effort, of the contemporary spirit is directed toward this: to eat once again of the Tree of Knowledge, to make possible the impossible, redemption through union, through closest familiarity of climactic spirit with mankind. And the last hope of spirit, "the hope beyond hopelessness," "transcendence of despair," is the paradox of Grace, that salvation comes only of utter desperation.

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SELF-PORTRAIT OF A 17th-CENTURY HOUSEWIFE

The Memoirs of Glückel of Hameln

DAVID SCHEINERT

IN 1690, at the age of forty-four, about a year after the death of her husband, Glückel of Hameln began the writing of what is as much a ledger as the "memoirs of her life."

A book of accounts and prayers. Piety and money are mixed in equal parts. The tone of this book, which is also the diary of a mother and a business woman, cannot be better described than by referring the reader to the letters he might have received, before the war, from a Jewish grandmother in Rumania or Poland. Scandals, births, sicknesses, dowries, quotations from religious texts, well-tried commonplaces, and that cautious and familiar formula which signalizes those who have not the habit of writing: "What more is there to write of this?" or: "What else is there to tell?" The reader will find his way.

Her plan is clear from the beginning. "If God grants me life to do it," she says to her children, "I intend to leave you my memoirs in seven small volumes." This task is undertaken with modesty. She has not even the desire to instruct her descendants. "I am not able. Our sages have written several books for our instruction, and we have our Holy Torah to enlighten us and make us understand all things needful to lead us from this world into the future one." She writes simply "to calm her soul, to shorten the sleepless hours." The last years of her life seem bitter to her. She seeks solace from her cares, from the annoyance caused her by certain of her children, from the grief of having lost her husband.

Nevertheless, the account that Glückel of Hameln has left us is precious. Although most of the time "familiocentric," and indeed to the point of nausea, it opens up a little window on the life of the Jews of Germany in the 17th century, and even on some of the important events of the time. The Jewish women of that time wore no veils, but they just as well might have. The glance Glückel casts upon the world is singularly maladroit and timid, and what she has to tell us of it is tame and brief, as if she were ashamed to take an interest in matters no "proper" Jewish woman ought in any way to be concerned with.

But it is already sufficiently extraordinary that a simple middle-class Jewess of Hamburg should have composed this account, probably the first such account to be written by a daughter of Israel.

Her language is Judeo-German, a language where most of the time it is the ear that fixes the appearance of words, delivering them up to the pen that mutilates them (like a concierge who betrays the lodger who refuses to show himself), making them invalids fit to be accepted into the society of Yiddish.

THE MEMOIRS OF GLÜCKEL OF HAMELN is one of the few personal documents bearing on Jewish life before the 19th century that has come down to us; as a self-portrait of a Jewish matron it is doubly rare. Glückel was born in Hamburg in 1646. At the death of her husband in 1689, she took over the management of his business, and shortly thereafter began to write the story of her life. These memoirs are invaluable as a source-book for German Jewish history in the 17th century, and as a literary record of Jewish experience. DAVID SCHEINERT, a well-known European writer on Jewish subjects, here gives a taste of its quality and of the personality of its author. His article, "Jewish Culture in Western Europe" appeared in the March COMMENTARY. He was born in Poland in 1916, and went with his family to Belgium in 1925. He was with the underground in Northern France during the war, and has now returned to Belgium. *The Memoirs* was published in an English translation by Marvin Lowenthal in 1932. Mr. Scheinert's article was translated from the French by Martin Greenberg.

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GLÜCKEL and her husband, Haim Hameln, live in Hamburg. Haim buys and sells pearls and precious stones, attends the commercial fairs, negotiates bills of exchange, enjoys an extensive credit, trades with people in Holland, Denmark, and Poland, every two years gets his wife with child in obedience to the divine injunction to "increase and multiply," prays at the synagogue, prays at home, studies the Talmud. His wife, according to an unvarying formula, speaks of him as "my treasure and my honor." As for her, she raises her children, interests herself in the business affairs of her husband, and reckons up her parents, friends, and acquaintances in thalers. "He was a man worth 15,000 thalers." "My father-in-law gave us a small vase worth about twenty thalers." Rare are the pages that include no mention of thalers.

Glückel has a head for figures. It would seem that not only is she interested in business matters, but that she is almost as expert in them as her husband, who never fails to consult her. When it is a question of concluding a partnership with Judah Liebmann (one of the richest and most prominent Jews of Germany, who later became purveyor to the Prince), who makes them magnificent promises—promises, however, that Haim Hameln regards with scepticism ("Words are always good")—it is she who is called upon to draw up the contract. But all this doesn't keep Glückel from nursing her children, whom she describes to us as the most beautiful, the most lively, the most *fein* children in the world. And that doesn't keep her from interlarding her catalog of business deals and her calendar of pregnancies and births in her circle with some very well-chosen extracts from Job, the Psalms, or Proverbs. At the same time that she details precisely the possessions of every Jew who passes within her view, she insists on the insignificance of man, on the necessity for him to submit to the divine decisions—for what is man but "a lump of clay"?

Glückel of Hameln's preoccupations and standards do not in general go beyond the limits of her caste. She has servants, employes, a style of living corresponding to her social condition. Honor and wealth go together. Of her husband she says: "If God had permitted him to live, he would have become a great man, for God gave him good fortune. If he had picked up—excuse the expression—some dung, gold would surely have fallen out of it."

And the Jews with whom she consorts resemble her. She feels no contempt for the "Pletten-Gäste" (*Billetten-Gäste*), the poor Jews whom the community referred by ticket to the tables of the well-to-do; she is simply unaware of them. Her relatives sell precious stones and every other kind of merchandise, for "a Jew tries a little bit of everything." Forbearance, compunction, and a plethora of Biblical quotations—the state of mind of a 17th-century Jew of property, menaced by the laws of the country, on guard against the whimsies of the rulers on the one hand, and, on the other, the envy of less-favored coreligionists—for "the way things are among Jews, when someone makes a hundred thalers, people make it into a thousand."

"We must thank God for all the things he is pleased to give us"—and Glückel does not bargain with him over his favors. As for the rest, it is up to her husband to take care of it. Haim Hameln, unhappily, returning from a difficult journey (they were all difficult at that time), suffers a fall that causes him a hernia. He forbids his wife to mention it to their acquaintances. It seems he is afraid that it might have an injurious effect on his children, that his illness might be transmissible. It is only with the greatest reluctance that he consents to be treated by doctors, a useless intervention since it comes too late.

GLÜCKEL is left with several unmarried children. After having lamented the loss of her husband, "the crown of her head," who departed this world in honor and wealth—an old story in her milieu—she proceeds to take in hand the business and matrimonial affairs of the family (the two go together). She buys hose, "pearls by the ounce," she travels about in every direction, commands a considerable credit, carries on a detailed correspondence with marriage-brokers, negotiates

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dowries, pays visits, is always well received, politely discusses marriage contracts, but without giving in one inch on her claims. She describes, without any pretentious embellishment, the way in which marriages were made or unmade at that time among people of her position: "We arrived at Baiersdorf and saw there the daughter of Samson Baiersdorf. He saw my son and we were ready to conclude the agreement, but were unable to agree because of a thousand marks."

The last pages of her memoirs are filled with regrets and recriminations. Doesn't she herself write: "My diary is made up in part of sorrow and in part of satisfaction, as is the ordinance of the world"? It would seem that she must have ended her days in sorrow—a sorrow entirely relative, however. At the age of fifty-four she remarries with a widower, a merchant from Metz, whom she joins there. She gives rather cautious expression to the regret that this marriage causes her, but she does not conceal the fact that she has come off the worse, that she has been deceived. (Let us not misunderstand: we are dealing here with Jews of the 17th century. Nothing is involved here except money, in which, however, is contained her whole idea of honor. Her husband's virtue is not in question; there are no disturbances of passion in this book, which is indeed a *livre de raison.*)

In spite of the gold and jewelry in her new husband's coffers, in spite of his position as president of the community, the man goes bankrupt. He runs away at first in order to avoid arrest, but manages all the same to satisfy his creditors by paying off his debts in half. There were times, says Glückel, when there was no bread in the house. One can well understand her resentment, the bitter comparisons she must have made between her present state of want and the life she led when Haim Hameln was alive. The bankrupt, who suffers from the gout, eventually departs this world. It does not appear that Glückel regrets him very much. In spite of her complaints, she is still able to keep a servant. One of her sons-in-law sets aside a room for her in his house. But she has twenty-two steps to climb. . . . Then she is received into the house of another member of her second husband's family. This time she is treated with the respect due her station. This does not prevent her from taking care to mollify the jealous watchfulness of the Lord, calling herself every possible kind of "sinner," a woman unworthy of so many honors. Humility is a frequent appurtenance of those whom fortune has favored. . . . From now on she will divide her time among her synagogal duties, religious observances, news received from her children in Germany or Holland, and the memory of her past "honors."

All this, although it is not lacking in interest, would only inform us of the commercial and family life of middle-class Jews of the 17th century. Happily, there is more. Several picturesque details add vivid touches to this otherwise sober succession of domestic confidences. I pass over three murders narrated as bits of sundry news. One of them, however, is a good demonstration of the dangers of traveling alone at the time: a miserly Jew, to save himself the cost of a journey by carriage, gets his throat properly cut by highwaymen. Glückel Hameln never ventures forth alone on the roads. One day her husband puts her in the charge of a certain Jacob, whose profession, it would seem, is to serve as "traveling companion." Jacob is of a character easily prevailed upon and has a throat that is perpetually dry. He and the postmaster get drunk together, leaving Glückel a prey to her lively fears. She commissions some peasants to bring Jacob back. He is found fast asleep on the bank of a river. Having come back to the inn, he gets drunk once again, and it is Glückel who is obliged to watch over this strange "traveling companion." Another time, crossing the gulf of Dollart by boat with her husband on their way back from Holland, where they attended the marriage of their daughter, she gets up out of her bunk, against Haim's advice, to nurse her child, becomes seasick, is certain that she is going to die, and recites the confession of sins.

This marriage of her daughter in Holland is celebrated with a magnificence and luxury

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that astonishes even so rich a woman as Glückel. In the presence of the son of the Prince, who is present at the solemnity, some bizarrely-costumed artists execute a *danse macabre*. Glückel doesn't have very much to say of this. The phrase she uses, under the guise of a refined indifference—a species of "talking in order to say nothing"—precisely describes this entertainment: "It was unusual." In truth, these attractions were not only unusual among the Jews, but were unusual in non-religious ceremonies in general. The precarious situation of the Jews and their constant care to procure protection from the great are also revealed during this marriage. The father-in-law of the bride wishes to make a gift of a very expensive gold watch to the son of the Prince. A friend dissuades him from it. Some time afterward the Prince dies and his son succeeds him; the father-in-law bites his knuckles and overwhelms his too-niggardly counselor with violent reproaches.

GLÜCKEL tells us in detail of her whims when pregnant. With her mother she passes a fruit-stall, catches sight of some medlars, a fruit that she loves, and neglects to buy them. Some time afterward she gives birth to a little boy whose entire body is covered with dark spots. The baby is unable to open its mouth and grows weaker day by day. Glückel then decides to send a servant after some medlars, shows one to the infant, who greedily sucks the fruit. The dark spots disappear and the child develops normally.

There is a great deal of superstition in this pious woman, who in her religion is rational and orthodox. When she speaks of the panic in the synagogue of Metz in 1715, a panic that cost the lives of six women, she reports the testimony of a certain Esther, who swears to have seen six veiled women of great stature on the stairs of the synagogue. These apparitions attempted to hurl her down from the top of the stairs of the synagogue, at the same time that they shield her little boy from injury. Glückel also recounts the vision of a Jewess who was washing her dishes in the waters of the Moselle one evening of the year 1719. "The sky opened like a . . . [illegible] . . . and sparks leaped out of the opening; and afterward the sky closed together again, as if someone had drawn a curtain. Please God it was a favorable omen. Amen."

After the Sabbatai Zevi scandal, the source of frenzies, frights, and the most naked disappointment, the Hamburg plague begins in 1664. In Glückel's account this event is reduced to the proportions of a family occurrence. She leaves Hamburg with her husband. They establish themselves in Hanover in the home of their parents. Glückel notices that her little girl Zipporah has an abscess in her armpit. Since her husband some time ago had suffered from the same complaint, and a barber-surgeon had applied a plaster to the aching spot, the mother sends a servant after her husband, who is in the synagogue, to ask him what barber-surgeon he used. Some relatives of Glückel meet the servant on the street, who tells them the story of the abscess. An old Polish Jewess overhears it, comes to examine the child, and at once causes a turmoil in the family circle: "The little girl has the plague!" Since the Hamelns come from Hamburg, the alarming announcement seems to have some substance to it. A family council is held. The Jews are afraid that the news will reach the ears of the Duke, and it is decided, in spite of the mother's protests, to send away the little girl, accompanied by a servant, to a little village, Hainholz, a "Sabbath's distance" from Hanover. They dress the girl and the servant in rags. They are to tell the peasants, in order not to arouse suspicion, that the Jews of Hanover don't have enough room to put them up because of the influx of poor into the city on the occasion of the Feast of Tabernacles, but that food will be sent to them. The father, in the company of members of his family, is authorized to visit his child, but he is forbidden to touch her. The little girl gets well, and, in the face of this evidence, the family council and the women, somewhat confused, concede their error.

It is thus that Glückel Hameln views the catastrophes and happenings of her time.

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Sabbatai Zevi's hoax is reduced to a question of her father-in-law's two barrels of preserved meat, and the Hamburg plague to a plaster. The myopia of a contemporary, of a woman entirely taken up with swaddling clothes, thalers, and moralizing. As a historical document, it is inept, but the information it contains is first-hand. And then consider, here is a Jewess who writes. Isn't this a remarkable enough fact at this time, and even in our own, where the number of Jewish women writers is not a large one? A woman who writes, and who, occasionally, writes very well. I shall illustrate this later, after having attempted to extract the last things of value from her text.

In Glückel's family circle the precarious life of the Jews of her time is never evoked except in connection with God. This isn't difficult to understand. The over-all view is lacking. We are hardly aware of the stupid injustice of the lot of the Jews, and in this way become contemporaries of the author. We are concerned only with some "letters of protection" that one of the mighty ones will give us. When a Jew is murdered in our town, we say "sh-h-h" to our wife, who wants to discover the murderer at any cost. When she discovers him, we quake. When the judge has him arrested, we quake some more. When the corpse is disinterred, we address a prayer to the Lord. And when the guilty person is condemned to submit to the rack and pillory on the public square, we hide in our rooms, for "the Jews are in danger of death and a great hatred is rising up against them."

We think only of the giving of gifts to the favorites of the Prince and Duke, and we are afraid of falling sick in Leipzig, where we are tolerated only at the time of the fair, for "if a Jew dies there, he forfeits all his property." It is to our advantage here that we are following not an accomplished writer who hides behind his "works of art," but a very limited observer who reveals herself at every step.

At times, as I have said, Glückel hits upon expressions of a pithy and piercing brevity. It is a salt too rare for us not to attempt to sprinkle the end of this study with it. Side by side with a hypertrophy of expression that will not astonish the reader used to reading the little Yiddish newspapers or the letters of the grandmother to whom he was referred at the beginning of this essay—Glückel is "assassinated" several times over, and her supposed deaths are too many to be counted—there are some happy surprises, occasional spices that cut the insipidity of the broth. The reader has already been able to sample some of them. Speaking of a very severe winter, Glückel writes: "It was so cold then that heaven and earth wanted to freeze together"; and her father-in-law, who comes to meet his children in front of the city of Hanover, appears to her "like an angel, the prophet Elijah, with a staff in his hand, a snowy beard reaching to his waist, and cheeks red as blood. To speak briefly: if one were to paint a man both old and handsome, one could not have painted a more handsome one." Her daughter's death produces a flow of unctuous and sanctimonious stock phrases, but in the midst of this deluge comes one staggering sentence, when she laments that "so beautiful a child had to chew the black earth."

The 17th century is the century of Louis XIV and the great classicists. It is difficult to believe that it is also the century of Glückel. What a miracle is writing, which, side by side with the Alexandrines of Jean Racine can preserve also this account of the domestic cares of a Jewess, a simple Jewess who lived without even suspecting the near presence of genius! What a miracle, which can preserve the trace of even the humblest, and offers us the companionship of even a mute existence!

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THE BADGE

A Story

ROBERT MISRAHI

I WISH I had a new suit to sew it on. This one's all shabby and the patch on the right-hand pocket stands out too much.

Still *it* is so very bright, their eyes will fasten on it and they won't look at anything else.

All the same, I must dress carefully. They'll be staring at me and I'd just as soon not take chances. I've pressed the crease in my trousers, everything is brushed, shoes shined—only my tie has to be changed; it should be maroon, not blue. To think some people believed *it* would be blue and white! After all, yellow and black—not so bad—

I'll go right out; I don't feel hungry, so I'll just leave everything on the table, straighten the place up tonight. One last look in the mirror: really it has a kind of assurance, with those six defensive and stubborn points. I'll hold a book in my hand, but I must remember not to put it under my arm, because that would hide *it*. Have I forgotten anything—my knife, my papers? All right, let's go.

I'D better be on time at the shop today. It's twenty-five of nine; that leaves time to walk; no Métro for me. There'll be no rain, no chance of the colors running, it will be all right to walk.

The boss will be alone today because the tailor is sick. What will he say? Well, we'll see. Maybe he'll ask me to change my coat on account of the customers, or maybe he'll send me to the basement to spend the day brushing off the clothes.

I'll take the measurements and call out the figures. No, I'll stay behind the counter and answer their questions. The customers will be surprised; usually it's the tailor who receives them, in his black coat and striped trousers. Today it will be me, a young clerk. They won't say anything; they'll just pretend I have no chest—I'll be nothing but a pair of hands for sticking pins into the clothing and a mouth for answering questions. I'll speak in a colorless voice as if it were I who was fleeing from them, and the boss will go over his accounts or talk on the telephone with an air of absorption. Yellow and black. I'll be able to see it in all the mirrors.

The boss might look for an excuse to get rid of me. I must not be late.

I'll take the small streets first, where I'll meet fewer people, make as many turns as I wish, and get onto the larger streets whenever I want to. There are those little covered alleyways leading from one street to another. The difficulty comes from the ash cans and the cafés. The ash cans make it impossible to walk at the very edge of the sidewalk. I'll have to go along the walls—it is out of the question to walk in the middle of the sidewalk—and all along the walls there are the black and mirror-like windows of all the bars. At every step there is a café, and each one reflects the same image; everything is black and yellow. Height: one meter fifty. Hair: black. Eyes: black. Complexion: sallow. Nose: absolutely not aquiline. Distinguishing marks. . . .

Eyes straight ahead. That won't involve me in anything, there's no one in front. But when there is someone? The first one will look at it furtively and then fix me in his glance. He'll go on walking, slowly, pru-

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dently, turning quick, indifferent glances now and then towards the ash cans without really taking his eyes off me. He'll come towards me and finally I'll see that his lips are imperceptibly compressed. Before passing me he'll take one more look, very quickly, at my chest, then into my eyes, and then I'll sense him behind me, and I'll feel sure that the compression of his lips was a nasty smile.

ALL those windows. They'll see it even before they notice my face.

There's one: eyes sunk in a wooden face, he goes by, but he can't hide from himself that I'm all alone on the street. I must be the first one today. That ought to count for something. He pretends to have seen nothing. Am I not visible enough?

Another one. This one, he saw it right away when he came out of that street and now he's walking towards me. He has seen nothing but me, it's written in those empty eyes. He sees only me and pretends not to be looking. He'll go by without looking at it even for a moment, but he'll be able to say: I saw one. Very young, you know, and one wouldn't have believed it. He must have been going to work. Still, if you looked close he was just like the others. It's only at the first glance that he might have been able to fool you. A young man you wouldn't have suspected—one might almost have been tempted to confide in him. But all that's finished now: I KNOW ALL.

He looked at me once and he knows all! I can feel him behind me now, walking along, pretending indifference but bumping into the ash cans because he keeps thinking of me. No, you haven't finished thinking of us, today is only the first day. . . .

LOOKS as if I've started out to walk the streets all day. Never mind the shop. It's almost nine and I'll be late in any case. Anyhow, what's the hurry? After all, I'm a free man. The customers wear me out. Never satisfied, and what can one say to them? I'll walk to the end of this little street and then go into a café. Never mind how the proprietor feels. They can't keep me from going into a café, can they? Let them stare at me—I'll stare right back and what can they do? Not that one, the place is almost empty, just two men at a marble table. That's really too few. What I need is a big café, where at least I'll be noticed. Well, I'll just go on to the end of the street and after that I'll show myself. The boss will be furious, that's certain. Or maybe he won't say anything, maybe he'll think I'm sick. After all, I have a right to be sick. But who knows when I'll see him again?

Plenty of people now. A postman passes. A few people walking alone. Ah, you're all the same: all blind and dumb when I go by. But I'm not going home, you will have to endure it to the end. That one, what does he want? He pops out at the corner and turns toward me without taking his eyes off me for a second. He walks easily and is not even embarrassed by his soutane. What's he trying to say with those black eyes? I really think he's going to speak to me. But I haven't asked you anything, can't you understand I don't ask for anything? He doesn't look at it but he's seen it, all right, and he sees my face *through* it. What can he want to say? A priest—can he find the right words? And a young priest, too, what can he be good for? Not a word, but he did not take his eyes off me for an instant, while he raised his hat. Now he's gone by. He's quits. He'll be able to say: "I raised my hat to one, Father."

"God will repay you, Father."

"The sinners are indeed obdurate, Father. He made no response, not even a nod."

Priests everywhere, even in the little back streets. The way he kept looking at me. Coward. Couldn't stand to go by and let things alone. As for me, why do they look at me? I hate them. Their heads are full of ideas crawling out of their eyes like little insects and catching hold of me, and then I'm trapped. Impossible to think of anything except *it*. I've been made over, and that fellow in black didn't even try to hide it from me. A man who knows *all* the moment he turns into the street, and he walks towards you letting you see that he knows! Wants to have a good conscience and can't let things

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alone; looks at you and burns up your chest. A man in a soutane. Raises his hat and he's quits. That's too easy.

YOU'LL be having me with you all the time from now on, and there's nothing you can do about it. All the streets, the small ones and the big ones. I'll walk on the boulevards, the avenues, I'll be in the cafés. Wherever you go, I'll be there. Oh you'll have lots of time to look me over; I'll walk slowly and in the *middle* of the sidewalk—just like you.

You can have all the time you want to look at it, to see how it's made; this little golden, pointed image will be in your eyes the whole day long. And I too, I shall not forget you. You're blond and pale and all faded. In the summer you go to tan yourselves on your beaches . . . dream of being strong . . . but you remain hopelessly pale—and you seek and seek for your revenge.

A Negro, for instance: a Negro is a man of bronze, and the only way you can stand him is to draw him close to you and speak to him familiarly. But as for us, we slip through your fingers and so you must mark us out. Anything that's not pink frightens you.

You can look for ways to escape, but it's no use. I won't go home; you'll have me with you all day.

Boulevard Arago. Place Denfert is not far off. I've come out into the open and I'll go on to the end. There's a gendarme parading around and watching me, but he's wrong if he thinks I'm going to change anything in myself. That one over there, he's looking at me. He can't do what the other one did; he has no hat. What does he want? There is something sinister about the way he walks. Some kind of loafer, some shady character who is going to kill a little time thinking about me. Go ahead and look; yes, I'm one of them.

It's written, so it must be true. Now he's gone past and disappears slowly behind me. He looked right into my face, I am absolutely sure that he looked at me, but I couldn't see the color of his eyes or of his hair. Who is *he*? Me, I am a *Jew!*

I ABSOLUTELY must stop at a café, no matter where, and I don't care what the customers think. Even on the Place Denfert. Yes, above all on the Place Denfert.

I'm sure that one looked at me. His glance was very strange. You might call it a profound look, but what did it mean? Where was it directed, at me or at *it*? No, that's settled once and for all: from now on no one can ever look at me again for any reason except for that. It's not right to look at people that way. Since it's absolutely clear I ask nothing of *them*, what reason is there for all of them to act like that? Still, I don't think I was mistaken, that's the way he looked at me. But what was he trying to say? How can I make them understand that I'm asking no one for anything?

A Jew crossing the Boulevard Arago near Place Denfert was knocked down by a car. One less. Or perhaps: A young man who had been knocked down by a car was brought into the Broca Hospital. It was only a Jew.

That's what they would have put into the paper if that automobile had hit me. The driver looked perfectly capable of doing it. But they won't get me today. I must continue my walk. I won't disappear until I'm good and ready.

This café looks all right. Anyhow, I'll go in. It was a good idea to bring a book with me. There are some customers at the bar, several people at the tables. I'll sit down there, just facing the square. They'll be able to see me from every side.

"Waiter, have you any lemonade?"

"Sorry, I can't serve you. I have orders."

"But there are no laws."

"There will be. . . ."

What shall I do? I really wasn't thirsty, I just wanted to rest a little while, I was beginning to feel tired. But I must go on to the end. I'll take the Rue Denfert and maybe go towards the Boulevard St. Michel and the Seine. Yes, that's just the section I must go through. I've heard some things about the neighborhood and I'd like to see for myself. After all, they can't knock me down in the middle of the boulevard. Although what's the blood of a Jew. . . . But I

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don't believe it. I'll just walk a little bit among them. They can't do anything but report me to the police.

We were on the lawn divided into groups. The monitors took pride in their groups and tried to set us off to advantage. Bells were ringing, and naturally it was sunny because it was the month of August.

Barret was gathering together those who were going to church. He came up to our group.

"Those who are going to Mass step to the right."

I remained alone, immobile.

"Well, and you? Aren't you going with the others?"

"With me it's different."

There were fifteen boys on the right and then me on the left.

Ah, there's the boulevard. It's a forbidden area, but I'll go into it nevertheless, from the Observatory as far as the Seine, and every step will be a mark against them. I don't know what the smaller streets are like but it doesn't matter. I suppose that's where they have their schools, and their private areas. Today I'll go by the boulevard. Here I am, I am showing myself, I expose myself.

The sidewalks are rather large and there isn't much of a crowd. You're all pretty young but your masks are not very good, unreal. The colors of your clothing don't interest me. I don't care to become acquainted with your eyes. They all look at me sideways as they go by, glancing quickly at the thing. Their eyes are narrowed. A book in my hand, and I wear the sign, but I don't seem quite to fit the type. On the other hand, I am neither blond nor pink. They are perplexed. Two stout citizens look at me and say "Jew." But they can do nothing about it—that troubles them. I am irrefutable. Made in France. Yes, you think you're very strong, but you can't help thinking about me; I am the *only* person on the boulevard you are thinking about at this moment, and I am the only person you think about *in this way*. It is you who wanted to have this label put on me, and now I have become an absolutely extraordinary individual whom you see walking the street, whom you look at and talk about. A man not really like the others. You don't quite know whether you are afraid, or whether. . . .

Not a Jew on the boulevard this morning except me. Notice one thing: I'm not deformed. Not ugly. If you speak to me you will see that my French is like yours. The nose is not hooked. In my eyes, a suggestion of the Spanish, the Oriental. A little small, but no smaller than most Japanese. Neither an idiot nor a cretin. I make my living and I indulge myself in the luxury of making you run away from me instead of running away from you. In a word, I am a normal human being. *Therefore*, a Jew can be normal; and also, since I am a Jew, I am at once normal and exceptional. . . .

You will have to endure me to the end. Maybe you will even find yourselves pitying a poor young man to whom such a thing has been done. He was just like everybody else, and *nevertheless* he was wearing one. Yes, I am wearing one. Today it's brand new. In a few days it will be faded. But what's the difference? It's today that my splendor has been born. It's today that I've got word of my election.

Some women go by, white, pure, well-bred. The glance of beautiful Gentile women. . . .

All the same, I certainly wish I had something to eat. I must find a café where the waiters are not interested in this question and where there's enough of a crowd so that I won't be noticed right away. Afterwards, I can lower my newspaper and display my privileges. Not that one there, it's too small. And the building opposite looks like a police station. People are noticing me and perhaps there are some who have slowed down just enough to keep from passing me. Naturally I mustn't turn around, not even to look. Continue down the boulevard quietly and not turn my head. And why should I assume that anyone's so interested in me as to have followed me for an hour? How foolish to imagine that there has been someone

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waiting for the right moment to clap me on the shoulder and tell me to come along without causing a disturbance.

But they all look at me just enough to make me understand that they are they and I am I. And this morning, in spite of the heaviness in my legs from my long walk, I feel myself so strong that I reject once more this old-womanish idea. How I'd laugh if anyone told me about a man who walked around all morning because there was no chance for him to rest and get a bite to eat.

Dupont's has a very convenient system of doors. I'll go in by the Rue des Écoles and if the bar looks attractive I'll stay on that side. Otherwise, I'll go into the room on the boulevard side so as not to use the same door twice.

The waiter comes up to me as if he didn't see me.

"I am sorry, sir. . . . I've got orders."

"But there are no laws yet."

"It's no use insisting."

Of course it's no use insisting. . . . All the same, it wouldn't hurt them to let me take a drink at the bar. Well, those people thought something had happened to a Jew but they're wrong. I'm still the same.

And I'm beginning to see more and more that all the streets are the same. And all the people, as I go by, have the same monotonous shadow; nothing remains in them of the living being from whom you can always expect something. They are incapable even of really tasting the spice of my presence. But you can't expect too much of them. . . . After all, they don't know who I am. What I want most of all is a glass of water and a seat.

I DIDN'T think these steps could be so difficult, so steep, so hard. . . . I should think you could only go down alone. How do the others manage, those couples who walk on the rocky pavement of the river bank? But today there's no one. The quay is empty and the water is still. Yes, I believe there's no one there and I am going to be able to do it. After all, I'm not the very obvious kind. I have a chance to get away with it. They'll never ask for my papers and they won't see that my identity card has the red stamp "Jew."

I'll have to get some other papers. The important thing is to gain a little time. Never look at people, never say anything, never remain for a long time in the same place. Use the least crowded stations of the Métro. Avoid crowds, don't go around in the streets and the cafés. Nor the public toilets. Nor the movies. Stay at home, but never be there at five o'clock in the morning. Come home early in the evening. Avoid being noticed, avoid talking in a loud voice. . . .

I'll cut it. I carefully pull at the star, scraping at the material of my coat to remove the yellow threads and the black threads. There's no difference in color, the sun hasn't had time to leave a mark.

"What are you doing?"

"I'm taking this off."

Where did this kid come from? I didn't even hear him approach. He seems to be alone, but maybe someone is coming after him.

"Why are you taking that off?"

"For nothing. What do you care?"

"You're going to be like the others now?"

"Maybe. I'm going to work like the others. Did you come here to play?"

"I don't feel like it any more. Then you'll be nothing?"

"Oh, really. . . ."

"Me, I love to disguise myself in mid-Lent, and then the others come with me and say that I have become somebody, but when I take my mask off they are disappointed and they go and play further off. Why is it like that?"

"It's not always like that. . . ."

"Well, you're taking off your sign, it's the same thing. What kind of a sign is it? Don't you like it any more?"

"Oh, I was just making believe I was taking it off, just for fun. Well, I have to go. Au'voir."

"Au'voir. . . . But tell me, what are you going to do with it?"

"Oh, I don't know. I suppose I'll keep it."

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FROM THE AMERICAN SCENE

MY GRANDMOTHER HAD YICHUS

The Great Jewish Intangible

MAY NATALIE TABAK

ALADDIN had a lamp, the Rothschilds had money, someone's uncle had a candy store—my grandmother had *yichus.* It was as substantial as a stock of merchandise, yet magical and mysterious as the words "open sesame."

When I was very young, my mother died and her mother came to Chicago to live with us. It was from my grandmother that I learned Yiddish—and yichus. It was Big Bill Thompson's Chicago then. Our mayor had somehow destroyed or confused time for us, and we Chicagoans were desperately determined not to bow to the yoke of English tyranny. The watchword was: "All Men are Created Free and Equal." Every Chicago child was a defender of the weak, provider of the needy, and fighter for freedom. Our ancestors and our guide for living were the Minute Men, William Tell, and Sir Galahad. In the midst of all this my grandmother introduced yichus.

Yichus was everything. The possessor of yichus could see through false appearances, as Beauty saw beyond the Beast to the Beloved. In the face of any and all trials, poverty or riches, success or failure, yichus enabled you to conduct yourself with modesty, dignity, courage, and grace. It also imposed certain obligations: to behave with gentleness, courtesy, charity, and love toward everyone. Not for personal gain, that would be useless; the calculating older brothers were turned to stone by the King of the Golden River. Yichus, at the proper moment, revealed and rewarded the true worth of people and things.

My grandmother, I am sure, had never heard of Sindbad the Sailor, yet her tales convinced me that without yichus Sindbad would never have been "selected" for his adventures. Joan of Arc, Barbara Frietchie, Esther—all obviously had yichus. When a little later I read about Becky Sharp, I understood her behavior—no yichus. All the Knights of the Round Table, on the other hand, obviously had it. No one ever said so, and it was not necessary for me to think about it. I just understood it, as I understood that the world was round.

Other matters were also decided automatically by yichus. When my grandmother returned to New York with us, many people came to our house whom I had never met before; through the years, I was to hear their status discussed in detail. Some were considered undesirable. Pincus, for instance, was a *cham,* an illiterate, who had sneaked into the house through the back door by marrying a person of yichus. Such marriages were not unusual in this country where value had lost its meaning. Young Maxwell was a "shoester" and the son of shoesters. I already knew better than to point out to my grandmother that the unfortunate wretch had two college de-

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HARKAVY's Yiddish dictionary defines *Yichus* as "descent, lineage, noble descent; genealogy, pedigree; pride." But as the reader of this informal study will discover, these English terms give us only the bare bones of that heritage of scholarly ancestry which to Jews of the old school was the only true hall-mark of aristocracy. MAY NATALIE TABAK has been a kindergarten teacher and a social worker, has written poetry, and is now at work on a novel. She is the wife of Harold Rosenberg, poet and essayist; and the mother of a five-year-old daughter.

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grees. To my grandmother he was and would always remain simply a man who had no yichus.

Why? Quite simply: his father was no scholar, his grandfather was no scholar, his great-grandfather—the less said about him the better. It followed that even if Maxwell had gone to school, he had not done so because he was interested in learning for its own sake, but because he expected a profit from his investment in study. That made him a shoester.

Being a shoester—need I add?—had nothing to do with working on shoes. In this case the shoester taught French at Columbia. Conversely there had been famous rabbis who supported themselves and their families by cobbling. These men were not shoesters. Their thoughts were profound, their conversation learned and eloquent, their manners charming, and—they had yichus. In our house it never mattered, either for good or bad, how a man earned a living, or how much wealth he possessed. A doctor might sit in respectful silence while a button-hole maker held forth. Indeed, it is only now that I am very much older that I know he was a button-hole maker. In those days, all I gathered was that he was a learned man who had yichus, and was therefore listened to with respect.

Occasionally someone would show up who had plenty of yichus, but was nevertheless a fool. He aped the style of the learned and was said to be ignorant and pompous. Yet no one ever exposed him, and his inanities were never interrupted. His vain display was interpreted as an effort on his part to show respect for the scholarship of his ancestors by imitation. The company, therefore, showed its respect for that same scholarship by refraining from the Talmudic allusions and scholarly puns with which they would have hastened to put him in his place had he been lacking in yichus. In effect, the be-yichused dolt was treated with an almost tender tolerance, as if he had been the victim of an accident, say a twisted knee, or had a handicap, like a humped back. *Nebach, a nahr.*

Recently my uncle Hiram wrote a biography of my uncle Barney. He dedicated it to my uncle Sol, whose financial assistance made the publication possible. The dedication reads "To Kotin of California." Now "Kotin of California" is a trade name, well known in the dress industry. The dedication shocked me. Not only was my California uncle being addressed by a surname, but by a trade name. The book might as well have been dedicated to Coca Cola or General Motors. In our house to introduce a man by his surname was equivalent to saying: here is a man who is nobody. A kind of John Doe or Joe Doaks. They call him Doaks or Levine because no one knows who his family is. (One can guess what they must be like.) Anyone who *was* someone, even if he were an old man, would be presented as Reb Tevyeh, son of Hershel, grandson of Michael. It was immediately apparent that here was a man of consequence. This eighty-year-old man had yichus. In mentioning his name one was remembering his grandfather. It was that simple.

SOMEONE would pick up a child and ask: Whose child is this? No one thought to say, here are Hannah and Hank, the parents. Instead, it was always: he is the grandson of So-and-So, or even the great-grandson of So-and-So. My own grandfather had died in Europe long before I was born. Yet whenever we came to New York and met people at my grandmother's I was invariably identified as my Grandfather Michael's oldest grandchild.

Yichus was everything. My grandmother might grant that on rare occasions a man who appeared to have no distinguished rabbinical forebears had become an important scholar on his own. Trapped, she never went so far as to state flatly that appearances were deceitful and that *really* he was the descendant of a distinguished line. But by sighs and shrugs she did her best to intimate that if all could be told (sometimes the man might be dead three hundred years) yichus would be found not alien to him.

Gentiles, naturally, were foredoomed to a sort of second-class scholarship at best. With enough brains and application they might master a learned trade such as medicine or engineering. But *true* learning, the Talmud or philosophy, would forever remain incomprehensible to them. Of this my grandmother was convinced, and no amount of argument could alter her conviction. Triumphantly, I would confront her with the name of a great non-Jewish scientist, and give her an account of his accomplishments and of the honors and recognition he had received. My grand-

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mother would respond by questioning the value of his contribution. If that could not be broken down, she would then attempt to prove that the scientist's discoveries were merely the restatement of the work of a Jew.

Take radio, for instance. Centuries ago the Talmud mentioned "radio" as a means by which one can hear voices from afar. My grandmother proved this by showing me an article to that effect in a Jewish newspaper. Don't ask me what it all meant, but there it actually was. If the claim of plagiarism failed, she would undertake to distort the great man's name to show that it was originally Jewish. Somehow this device filled me with particular fury, and the few times my grandmother proved to be right I refused to admit it. When every other explanation failed, my grandmother darkly hinted that for a long time people thought the child Moses was a goy—a nobody—child of a *shiksa* princess.

Sometimes, moreover, it seemed, the soul of a great rabbi might be returned for devious reasons to the world in order to teach him and mankind humility. This informed soul might appear sometimes in the child of a family lacking in yichus or even, though this was very rare, in a goy. It was never a mediocre scholar who was thus produced. He was always a *zaddik,* a genius—and easily recognizable. By this means certain individuals, who happened to have appeared in unlikely walks of life among the communicants of other religions, were granted a special exemption by my grandmother, since their origins were lost in mysteries known only to God and the angels.

Having dismissed everyone lacking in yichus, my grandmother could afford to be completely democratic. As I grew older I had friends of many groups and many religions. So far as I was ever able to see, it made no difference to my grandmother whether the girls I brought home to meals or to spend the night or a weekend were white, Negro or Chinese, Catholic or Mohammedan. Once she had mastered her disappointment at their lack of yichus, she treated them all with equal cordiality and hospitality. A Negro girl used to come with a Hindu boy. Both of them seemed too thin to my grandmother and she would worry about them. Whenever they visited our house she would provide in abundance the foods the Hindu permitted himself to eat, and she prepared special rich dishes for the Negro girl. To her all the races of the world, save one, were all the same—goyim. People—good, interesting, human—but not even Jews—and without yichus.

HER graciousness to these friends and her utter indifference to their financial or social position tended to lull my socialist-Jeffersonian militancy about the equality of all men, yichus or no yichus. And then I would bring home a well-dressed, brilliant Jewish classmate with excellent manners, only to note suddenly that my grandmother's thin lips had entirely disappeared and that her manner had become quite altered. I would become uneasy and at the first chance would rush her off into a corner. "What's wrong now?" I would demand beligerently.

"That I should live to see the day when Michael's grandchild associates with a vulgarian, the daughter of a *grobe yung.*"

"What do you know about her father?" I would cry. "He's a fine educated man, a lawyer."

"American education—a lawyer. A social climber, you'll see," and my grandmother would retire to her bedroom, bitter over the downfall of Michael's house.

Filled with rage, I would return to my friend, my innocent attachment spoiled. And sooner or later it would turn out the girl was affected, or her father told dirty jokes, or her grandfather was illiterate. In the end, no doubt, she married for money.

What a nose my grandmother had for yichus! A fine car would drive up and a boy in evening clothes would come in to take me to a prom. Before anything else, he had to be presented to my grandmother, who somehow or other could only be located on these occasions in the kitchen in an apron, peeling a token potato. We never discussed this, but the potato peeling was obviously some sort of test of the essential good breeding of a new rich friend—just as a new poor friend was somehow always greeted in the living room with great ceremony, and a new clean headkerchief. If the newcomer found favor in my grandmother's murderously critical eyes, she would rise and greet him.

"He has an *edele ponem*—a cultured face," she would say to me in Yiddish. "Ask him who his ancestors are." Blushing, I would ask the boy, who knew not one word of

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Yiddish, The Question. My grandmother confidently waited. Invariably, her judgment was vindicated: he would produce at least two rabbis.

My grandmother could even spot a kind of goyish variety of yichus—this never meant money or an old family, but an ancestor who was a poet, or a historian, or a scholar. In time, my friends learned to bring my grandmother the name of a worthy ancestor as one brings a box of candy.

My grandmother refused to speak English in the presence of a Jew. To me this was another grievance. She spoke Russian and German rather well and a couple of other languages adequately. (These she had learned in Europe in order to conduct a business to earn money to leave her rabbi husband free to study.) Our Anglo-Saxon neighbors were all her friends. They exchanged roots and garden cuttings with her and always inquired about her respectfully when she failed to appear in the garden or street for a day or two. She could not have been so intimate with them had she not spoken some sort of English. But we in the family could never catch her at it. I am convinced that she regarded English and all other languages except Yiddish as good enough only for goyim and the mundane communications it was possible to exchange with them. Not for Jews. Slowly I came to realize that except in Yiddish she could not pepper her speech with the allusions and parables which her yichus and her responsibility to us demanded of her conversation with another Jew.

My father had become an atheist as a boy, when he had believed himself an anarchist. We grew up with the impression that religion was a matter of taste. But because my grandmother was the oldest and the most easily hurt, we observed at home all the most Orthodox practices. Every seder my father conducted the services as if every detail were infinitely sacred to him. In restaurants he might eat pork regularly, but at home, even in my grandmother's absence, he would never put cream in his coffee after meat. In his later years, he has become a chain cigar-smoker, yet he has never smoked on the Sabbath in her presence. It became a custom for my grandmother to disappear after the Sabbath meals, presumably to take a nap. This is a silent acknowledgment that my father might be too tired to take a walk around the block while having his smoke. She never returns to the living room without a good many coughs or much loud talking. This gives my father the opportunity to get rid of his cigar butt. Thus his comfort is respected and her honor not impaired. I cannot say exactly what this has to do with yichus, yet this Sabbath ritual has always seemed to me to have some connection with it.

"WHAT happened to the little girl with the dancing thievish eyes?" my grandmother once asked.

"She married a writer."

"A writer? Good. What does he write?"

"He has a successful play on Broadway. It's a comedy." Then I explained what a comedy was and how the plot of this one went.

"Very interesting," said my grandmother. "It sounds like an easy way to make a living. But you say he is a writer. Now tell me, what does he write?"

I tried to explain that plays, even such plays, had to be written, and that the people who wrote them were, in America, called writers. Impossible to make her see the point. This was not writing. Writing had to do with "learning," it was a serious, even a divine pursuit, and no man whose ancestors had devoted themselves to study would consider himself a writer because he manufactured trifles in order to earn some money.

That any cultivated household could conceivably not feel honored to welcome me, the granddaughter of Michael, her husband, never occurred to my grandmother. Thus I was trained to regard myself as a desirable member of any valid society. The possibility that I might be excluded or discriminated against because I was a Jew simply never entered my mind.

Instead of being concerned about the Jewish problem, I spent years insisting to my grandmother that *she* was intolerant, and that my Gentile friends were fully as good as I. I was so occupied with trying to get her to accept them that I never realized until very much later that perhaps they might have had similiar difficulties trying to convince their parents that their own yichus was not compromised by me, a Jew.

As the years went by yichus assumed a new and unfortunate significance for my grandmother. It became a consolation, a protective mantle in which she could wrap her-

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self and feel immune to the new ways and values that were freezing hers out. Many of the older people had died, and their children talked of strange things: how a business deal had been put over, how much their cars and fur coats cost, the poker hands they had held, the hotels and restaurants they had visited. Against all these wonders my grandmother could only assert the value of yichus, more and more desperately it seemed. Would she become the sole grim custodian and proprietor of yichus, like some ancient Southerner still treasuring his hoard of Confederate money, confident that some day it would recover its full value? Gone was the time when my grandmother dealt with the vulgar with light self-assurance. Now she fought them with bitterness and contempt, as if she sensed her inevitable defeat. Worse still, she now bragged of her yichus. It was pathetic, as if a king assured you that he really had a crown, and made of real fourteen-carat gold.

Came the summer's day in the country, when I broke the news to her that I was going to get married. My "friend" had gone for a walk and I was standing with my grandmother in the parlor of the old farmhouse we had been visiting for years.

"He's well educated," I explained. "A writer." My grandmother took on her most remote look and said nothing.

"He has no money," I went on, hunting around for likely references, "and will probably never earn any."

What more could she ask? Still no response. "He has contributed to a philosophical journal," I said hopefully.

Still silence. It was time to play my trump. "He reads and understands Hebrew."

"Who is his father?" my grandmother demanded in a dead and hopeless tone.

"A man who has taught his sons Hebrew," I said proudly. "And he goes to synagogue."

"Have you told his father who you are and what your yichus is?"

"Not altogether," I said evasively.

At this point the subject of our discussion walked in by the porch door.

Standing very erect, hands stiffly at her sides, eyes staring straight ahead, my grandmother launched into a recital of her yichus. She told him, without preliminaries, about my Grandfather Michael, about his father and his father's uncles and cousins, grandfathers and great grandfathers, where they had studied, who had ordained them. She did not ask whether he understood what she was talking about. Slowly and in orderly detail she went through the list as if she were replying to some immense questionnaire. Before she had finished I was faint with humiliation.

Then my friend spoke. In broken Yiddish, but with equal solemnity, though I detected an occasional glint, he began an account of his grandfathers *on both sides,* their uncles and cousins, his great grandfathers and their uncles, the famous commentary of Rabbi So-and-So who was his maternal grandmother's first cousin. Casually he mentioned the celebrated interlineations of Rabbi Thus-and-So, who was simply his father's great-uncle. Surely, my grandmother must have known or at least heard of his maternal grandmother, familiar to everyone as Raisel of the Yeshiva. Yes, my grandmother had heard of her and of her accomplished uncles. Together, she and my friend pursued this line through a few centuries.

Then my friend switched to his paternal grandfather. These relatives were *really* interesting and important. Alas, they were also more numerous. In each generation they spread out over the yeshivas of Europe like a swarm of praying mantes, studying, writing, leading their communities, leaving a heritage of eternal wisdom. This uncle had a grandfather on his mother's side and an uncle on his father's side. That nephew—. The entire tribe of Jacob seemed caught in the net. All rabbis and all of the highest.

My friend had been cheerfully following the prolific and tireless branch into medieval Spain when I suddenly became aware that for a long time my grandmother had said not a word. I glanced quickly at her. She was still standing, looking out into the distance. But there was a slump in her figure. All at once I felt very sorry for her. The history of the Jews takes a long time to tell. "Perhaps," I interrupted, "we ought to sit down."

My grandmother awoke promptly to the opportunity I had offered her. She pulled herself together, and—rather severely, I thought—said to my friend: "Remember, my son," she said, "remember that yichus isn't everything. What really counts is what a man is, himself. Yichus is not everything."

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CEDARS OF LEBANON

MOSES THE PROPHET

An American Reformer on the Great Law-Giver

HENRY GEORGE

HENRY GEORGE is most generally known as the author of *Progress and Poverty* and the founder of the "Single Tax" movement. A self-educated thinker, he was long neglected by orthodox economists; in recent years, however, his significance as an indigenous American social theorist has come to be acknowledged.

Henry George was born in Philadelphia in 1839 of Anglo-Scotch parents. Both parents were devoutly religious, and it is from them that he inherited his idealism and passion for justice; his writings are suffused with a spiritual, evangelical appeal, as well as doctrinaire stubbornness. He left school before he was fourteen, to begin an adventurous and usually poverty-stricken life as sailor, typesetter, salesman of clothes wringers, writer, and propagandist. His children, born after his marriage in 1861, suffered a childhood of destitution.

In 1886, Henry George ran as independent candidate for the New York mayoralty against Abraham S. Hewitt and Theodore Roosevelt. He ran second, behind the victorious Hewitt, and present-day historians generally concede that he was "counted out" by the Tammany machine. In 1897, he ran again for the same office as a "Bryan" Democrat; but, broken in health, he suffered an apoplectic stroke and died in October of that year. He is buried in Greenwood Cemetery, Brooklyn.

His major work *Progress and Poverty* was begun during the depression of 1873, and finally published in 1880. In the intervening years, he gave a series of public lectures of which "Moses"—here reprinted with slight omissions—was the most famous.—ED.

EACH recurring year brings a day on which, in every land, there are men who, gathering about them their families, and attired as if for a journey, eat with solemnity a hurried meal. Before the walls of Rome were traced, before Homer sang, this feast was kept, and the event to which it points was even then centuries old.

That event signals the entrance upon the historic stage of a people on many accounts remarkable—a people who, though they never founded a great empire nor built a great metropolis, have exercised upon a large portion of mankind an influence, widespread, potent, and continuous; a people who have for nearly two thousand years been without country or organized nationality, yet have preserved their identity and faith through all vicissitudes of time and fortune—who have been overthrown, crushed, scattered; who have been ground, as it were, to very dust, and flung to the four winds of heaven; yet who, though thrones have fallen, and empires have perished, and creeds have changed, and living tongues have become dead, still exist with a vitality seemingly unimpaired—a people who unite the strangest contradictions; whose annals now blaze with glory, now sound the depths of shame and woe.

The advent of such a people marks an epoch in the history of the world. But it is not of that advent so much as of the central and colossal figure around which its traditions cluster that I propose to speak.

Three great religions place the leader of the Exodus upon the highest plane they allot to man. To Christendom and to Islam, as well as to Judaism, Moses is the mouthpiece and lawgiver of the Most High; the medium, clothed with supernatural powers, through which the Divine Will has spoken.

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Yet this very exaltation, by raising him above comparison, may prevent the real grandeur of the man from being seen. It is amid his brethren that Saul stands taller and fairer. . . .

Here is a case in which sacred history may be treated as we treat profane history without any shock to religious feeling. Nor can the keenest [biblical] criticism resolve Moses into a myth. The fact of the Exodus presupposes such a leader.

To lead into freedom a people long crushed by tyranny; to discipline and order such a mighty host; to harden them into fighting men, before whom warlike tribes quailed and walled cities went down; to repress discontent and jealousy and mutiny; to combat reactions and reversions; to turn the quick, fierce flame of enthusiasm to the service of a steady purpose, require some towering character—a character blending in highest expression the qualities of politician, patriot, philosopher, and statesman.

Such a character in rough but strong outline the tradition shows us—the union of the wisdom of the Egyptians with the unselfish devotion of the meekest of men. From first to last, in every glimpse we get, this character is consistent with itself and with the mighty work which is its monument. It is the character of a great mind, hemmed in by conditions and limitations, and working with such forces and materials as were at hand—accomplishing, yet failing. Behind grand deeds a grander thought. Behind high performance the still nobler ideal.

EGYPT was the mould of the Hebrew nation--the matrix, so to speak, in which a single family, or, at most, a small tribe grew to a people as numerous as the American people at the time of the Declaration of Independence. For four centuries, according to Hebrew tradition—that is to say, for a period longer than America has been known to Europe—this growing people, coming a patriarchal family from a roving, pastoral life, had been under the dominance of a highly developed and ancient civilization—a civilization whose fixity is symbolized by monuments that rival in endurance the everlasting hills—a civilization so ancient that the Pyramids, as we now know, were hoary with centuries ere Abraham looked upon them.

No matter how clearly the descendants of the kinsmen who came into Egypt at the invitation of the boy slave become prime minister, maintained the distinction of race, and the traditions of a freer life, they must have been powerfully affected by such a civilization; and just as the Hebrews of today are Polish in Poland, German in Germany, and American in the United States, so, but far more clearly and strongly, the Hebrews of the Exodus must have been essentially Egyptians.

It is not remarkable, therefore, that the ancient Hebrew institutions show in so many points the influence of Egyptian ideas and customs. What is remarkable is the dissimilarity.

To the unreflecting, nothing may seem more natural than that a people, in turning their backs upon a land where they had been long oppressed, should discard its ideas and institutions. But the student of history, the observer of politics, knows that nothing is more unnatural. Habits of thought are even more tyrannous than habits of body. They make for the masses of men a mental atmosphere out of which they can no more rise than out of the physical atmosphere. A people long used to despotism may rebel against a tyrant; they may break his statutes and repeal his laws, cover with odium that which he loved, and honor that which he hated; but they will hasten to set up another tyrant in his place. A people used to superstition may embrace a purer faith, but it will be only to degrade it to their old ideas. A people used to persecution may flee from it, but only to persecute in their turn when they get power.

For "institutions make men." And when amid a people used to institutions of one kind, we see suddenly arise institutions of an opposite kind, we know that behind them must be that active, that initiative force—the men who in the beginnings make institutions.

This is what occurs in the Exodus. The striking differences between Egyptian and Hebrew polity are not of form but of essence. The tendency of the one is to subordination and oppression; of the other to individual freedom. Strangest of recorded births! From out the strongest and most splendid despotism of antiquity comes the freest republic. From between the paws of the rock-hewn Sphinx rises the genius of human liberty, and the trumpets of the Ex-

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odus throb with the defiant proclamation of the rights of man.

Consider what Egypt was. The very grandeur of her monuments that after the lapse, not of centuries, but of millenniums, seem to say to us, as the Egyptian priests said to the boastful Greeks, "Ye are children!" testify to the enslavement of the people—are the enduring witnesses of a social organization that rested on the masses an immovable weight. That narrow Nile valley, the cradle of the arts and sciences, the scene, perhaps, of the greatest triumphs of the human mind, is also the scene of its most abject enslavement. In the long centuries of its splendor, its lord, secure in the possession of irresistible temporal power, and securer still in the awful sanctions of a mystical religion, was as a god on earth, to cover whose poor carcass with a tomb befitting his state hundreds of thousands toiled away their lives. For the classes who came next to him, were all the sensuous delights of a most luxurious civilization, and high intellectual pleasures which the mysteries of the temple hid from vulgar profanation. But for the millions who constituted the base of the social pyramid there was but the lash to stimulate their toil, and the worship of beasts to satisfy the yearnings of the soul.

From time immemorial to the present day the lot of the Egyptian peasant has been to work and to starve that those above him might live daintily. He has never rebelled. The spirit for that was long ago crushed out of him by institutions which make him what he is. He knows but to suffer and to die.

Imagine what opportune circumstance we may, yet to organize and to carry on a movement resulting in the release of a great people from such soul-subduing tyranny, backed by an army of half a million highly trained soldiers, requires a leadership of a most commanding and consummate genius. But this task, surpassingly great though it is, is not the measure of the greatness of the leader of the Exodus. It is not in the deliverance from Egypt, it is in the constructive statesmanship that laid the foundations of the Hebrew commonwealth that the superlative grandeur of that leadership looms up. As we cannot imagine the Exodus without the great leader, neither can we account for the Hebrew polity without the great statesman. Not merely intellectually great, but morally great—a statesman aglow with the unselfish patriotism that refuses to grasp a scepter or found a dynasty.

THE lessons of modern history, the manifestations of human nature that we behold around us, would teach us to see in the essential divergence of the Hebrew polity from that of Egypt the impress of a master mind, even if Hebrew tradition had not testified both to the influence of such a mind, and to the constant disposition of accustomed ideas to reassert themselves in the minds of the people. Over and over again the murmurings break out; no sooner is the back of Moses turned than the cry, "These be thy gods, O Israel!" announces the setting up of the Egyptian calf; while the strength of the monarchial principle shows itself in the inauguration of a king as quickly as the far-reaching influence of the great leader is somewhat spent.

It matters not when or by whom were compiled the books popularly attributed to Moses; it matters not how much of the code there given may be the survivals of more ancient usage or the amplifications of a later age; its great features bear the stamp of a mind far in advance of people and time, of a mind that beneath effects sought for causes, of a mind that drifted not with the tide of events but aimed at a definite purpose.

The outlines that the record gives us of the character of Moses—the brief relations that wherever the Hebrew scriptures are read have hung the chambers of the imagination with vivid pictures—are in every way consistent with this idea. What we know of the life illustrates what we know of the work. What we know of the work illumines the life.

It was not an empire, such as had reached full development in Egypt or existed in rudimentary patriarchal form in the tribes around, that Moses aimed to found. Nor was it a republic where the freedom of the citizen rested on the servitude of the helot, and the individual was sacrificed to the state. It was a commonwealth based upon the individual—a commonwealth whose ideal it was that every man should sit under his own vine and fig tree, with none to vex him or make him afraid; a commonwealth in which none should be condemned to ceaseless toil; in which, for even the bond slave, there should

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be hope, in which, for even the beast of burden there should be rest. A commonwealth in which, in the absence of deep poverty, the manly virtues that spring from personal independence should harden into a national character—a commonwealth in which the family affections might knit their tendrils around each member, binding with links stronger than steel the various parts into the living whole.

It is not the protection of property, but the protection of humanity, that is the aim of the Mosaic code. Its sanctions are not directed to securing the strong in heaping up wealth so much as to preventing the weak from being crowded to the wall. At every point it interposes its barriers to the selfish greed that, if left unchecked, will surely differentiate men into landlord and serf, capitalist and workman, millionaire and tramp, ruler and ruled. Its Sabbath day and Sabbath year secure, even to the lowliest, rest and leisure. With the blast of the jubilee trumpets the slave goes free, the debt that cannot be paid is canceled, and a re-division of the land secures again to the poorest his fair share in the bounty of the common Creator. The reaper must leave something for the gleaner; even the ox cannot be muzzled as he treadeth out the corn. Everywhere, in everything, the dominant idea is that of our homely phrase—"Live and let live!"

And the religion with which this civil policy is so closely intertwined exhibits kindred features—from the idea of the brotherhood of man springs the idea of the fatherhood of God. Though the forms may resemble those of Egypt, the spirit is that which Egypt had lost. Though a hereditary priesthood is retained, the law in its fullness is announced to all the people. Though the Egyptian rite of circumcision is preserved and Egyptian symbols reappear in all the externals of worship, the tendency to take the type for the reality is sternly repressed. It is only when we think of the bulls and the hawks, of the deified cats and sacred ichneumons of Egypt, that we realize the full meaning of the command: "Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image!"

And if we seek beneath form and symbol and command the thought of which they are but the expression, we find that the great distinctive feature of the Hebrew religion, that which separates it by such a wide gulf from the religions amid which it grew up, is its utilitarianism, its recognition of divine law in human life. It asserts, not a God who is confined to the far-off beginning or the vague future, who is over and above and beyond men, but a God who in His inexorable law is here and now; a God of the living as well as the dead; a God of the market place as well as of the temple; a God whose judgments wait not another world for execution, but whose immutable decrees will, in this life, give happiness to the people that heed them and bring misery upon the people who forget them. Amid the forms of splendid degradation in which a once noble religion had in Egypt sunk to petrification, amid a social order in which the divine justice seemed to sleep, I AM was the truth that dawned upon Moses. And in his desert contemplation of nature's flux and reflux, the death that bounds her life, the life she brings from death, always consuming yet never consumed—I AM was the message that fell upon his inner ear.

THE absence in the Mosaic books of any reference to a future life is only intelligible by the prominence into which this truth is brought. Nothing could have been more familiar to the Hebrews of the Exodus than the doctrine of immortality. The continued existence of the soul, the judgment after death, the rewards and punishments of the future state, were the constant subjects of Egyptian thought and art. But a truth may be hidden or thrown into the background by the intensity with which another truth is grasped. And the doctrine of immortality, springing as it does from the very depths of human nature, ministering to aspirations which become stronger and stronger as intellectual life rises to higher planes and the life of the affections becomes more intense, may yet become so incrusted with degrading superstitions, may be turned by craft and selfishness into such a potent instrument for enslavement, and so used to justify crimes at which every natural instinct revolts, that to the earnest spirit of the social reformer it may seem like an agency of oppression to enchain the intellect and prevent true progress; a lying device with which the cunning fetter the credulous.

The belief in the immortality of the soul must have existed in strong forms among

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the masses of the Hebrew people. But the truth that Moses brought so prominently forward, the truth his gaze was concentrated upon, is the truth that has often been thrust aside by the doctrine of immortality, and that may perhaps, at times, react on it in the same way. This is the truth that the actions of men bear fruit in this world, that though on the petty scale of individual life wickedness may seem to go unpunished and wrong to be rewarded, there is yet a Nemesis that with tireless feet and pitiless arm follows every national crime, and smites the children for the father's transgression; the truth that each individual must act upon and be acted upon by the society of which he is a part, that all must in some degree suffer for the sin of each, and the life of each be dominated by the conditions imposed by all. It is the intense appreciation of this truth that gives the Mosaic institutions so practical and utilitarian a character. Their genius, if I may so speak, leaves the abstract speculations where thought so easily loses and wastes itself, or finds expression only in symbols that become finally but the basis of superstition in order that it may concentrate attention upon the laws which determine the happiness or misery of men upon this earth. Its lessons have never tended to the essential selfishness of asceticism, which is so prominent a feature in Brahminism and Buddhism, and from which Christianity and Islamism have not been exempt. Its injunction has never been, "Leave the world to itself that you may save your own soul," but rather, "Do your duty in the world that you may be happier and the world be better." It has disdained no sanitary regulation that might secure the health of the body. Its promise has been of peace and plenty and length of days, of stalwart sons and comely daughters. . . . The great concern of Moses was with the duty that lay plainly before him; the effort to lay the foundation of a social state in which deep poverty and degrading want should be unknown—where men released from the meaner struggles that waste human energy should have opportunity for intellectual and moral development.

Here stands out the greatness of the man. What was the wisdom and stretch of the forethought which in the desert sought to guard in advance against the dangers of a settled state, let the present speak.

In the full blaze of the nineteenth century, when every child in our schools may know of common truths things of which the Egyptian sages never dreamed; when the earth has been mapped and the stars have been weighed; when steam and electricity have been pressed into our service and science is wresting from nature secret after secret—it is but natural to look back upon the wisdom of three thousand years ago as the man looks upon the learning of the child.

And yet for all this wonderful increase in knowledge, for all this enormous gain of productive power, where is the country in the civilized world in which today there is not want and suffering—where the masses are not condemned to toil that gives no leisure, and all classes are not pursued by a greed of gain that makes life an ignoble struggle to get and to keep? Three thousand years of advance, and still the moan goes up: "They have made our lives bitter with hard bondage, in mortar and in brick, and in all manner of service!" Three thousand years of advance! And the piteous voices of little children are in the moan.

Standing as I stand, where modern ideas have had fullest, freest development; in the newest great city of the newest great nation; by the side of that ultimate sea, where ends the westward march of the race that has circled the globe, and farther west meets farthest east, the cool shades and sweet waters whose promise has so long lured us on seem dissolving into mocking mirage. . . .

We progress and we progress, we girdle continents with iron roads and knit cities together with the mesh of telegraph wires; each day brings some new invention; each year marks a fresh advance—the power of production increased, and the avenues of exchange cleared and broadened. Yet the complaint of "hard times" is louder and louder, and everywhere are men harassed by care and haunted by the fear of want. With swift, steady strides and prodigious leaps, the power of human hands to satisfy human wants advances and advances, is multiplied and multiplied. Yet the struggle for mere existence is more and more intense, and human labor is becoming the cheapest of commodities. Beside glutted warehouses human beings grow faint with hunger and shiver with cold; under the shadow of churches festers the vice that is born of want.

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Trace to its root the cause that is thus producing want in the midst of plenty, ignorance in the midst of intelligence, aristocracy in democracy, weakness in strength—that is giving to our civilization a one-sided and unstable development, and you will find it something which this Hebrew statesman three thousand years ago perceived and guarded against. Moses saw that the real cause of the enslavement of the masses of Egypt was what has everywhere produced enslavement, the possession by a class of the land upon which and from which the whole people must live. He saw that to permit in the land the same unqualified private ownership that by natural right attaches to the things produced by labor, would be inevitably to separate the people into the very rich and the very poor, inevitably to enslave labor—to make the few the masters of the many, no matter what the political forms; to bring vice and degradation, no matter what the religion.

And with the foresight of the philosophic statesman who legislates not for the need of a day, but for all the future, he sought, in ways suited to his times and conditions, to guard against this error. Everywhere in the Mosaic institutions is the land treated as the gift of the Creator to His common creatures, which no one has the right to monopolize. Everywhere it is, not your estate, or your property, not the land which you bought, or the land which you conquered, but "the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee"—"the land which the Lord lendeth thee." And by practical legislation, by regulations to which he gave the highest sanctions, he tried to guard against the wrong that converted ancient civilizations into despotisms—the wrong that in after centuries ate out the heart of Rome—that produced the imbruting serfdom of Poland and the gaunt misery of Ireland, the wrong that is already filling American cities with idle men, and our virgin states with tramps. He not only provided for the fair division of the land among the people, and for making it fallow and common every seventh year, but by the institution of the jubilee he provided for a re-distribution of the land every fifty years, and made monopoly impossible.

I do not say that these institutions were, for their ultimate purpose, the very best that might even then have been devised, for Moses had to work, as all great constructive statemen have to work, with the tools that came to his hand, and upon materials as he found them. Still less do I mean to say that forms suitable for that time and people are suitable for every time and people. I ask not veneration of the form, but recognition of the spirit. . . .And yet today how much we owe to these institutions!

Let the mistake of those who think that man was made for the Sabbath, rather than the Sabbath for man, be what it may; that there is one day in the week that the working man may call his own, one day in the week on which hammer is silent and loom stands idle, is due, through Christianity, to Judaism—to the code promulgated in the Sinaitic wilderness. And who that considers the waste of productive forces can doubt that modern society would be not merely richer but happier, had we received as well as the Sabbath day the grand idea of the Sabbath year, or adapting its spirit to our changed conditions, secured in another way an equivalent reduction of working hours.

It is in these characteristics of the Mosaic institutions that, as in the fragments of a Colossus, we may read the greatness of the mind whose impress they bear—of a mind in advance of its surroundings, in advance of its age; of one of those star souls that dwindle not with distance, but glowing with the radiance of essential truth hold their light while institutions and languages and creeds change and pass. That the thought was greater than the permanent expression it found, who can doubt? Yet from that day to this that expression has been in the world a living power.

From the free spirit of the Mosaic law sprang the intensity of family life that amid all dispersions and persecution has preserved the individuality of the Hebrew race; that love of independence that under the most adverse circumstances has characterized the Jew; that burning patriotism that flamed up in the Maccabees and bared the breasts of Jewish peasants to the serried steel of Grecian phalanx and the resistless onset of Roman legion; that stubborn courage that in exile and in torture held the Jew to his faith. It kindled that fire that has made the strains of Hebrew seers and poets phrase for us the highest exaltations of thought; that intellectual vigor that has over and over again made

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the dry staff bud and blossom. And passing outward from one narrow race it has exerted its power wherever the influence of the Hebrew Scriptures has been felt. It has toppled thrones and cast down hierarchies. It strengthened the Scottish Covenanter in the hour of trial, and the Puritan amid the snows of a strange land. It charged with the Ironsides at Nasby; it stood behind the low redoubt on Bunker Hill.

But it is in example as in deed that such lives are helpful. It is thus that they dignify human nature and glorify human effort, and bring to those who struggle, hope and trust. The life of Moses, like the institutions of Moses, is a protest against that blasphemous doctrine, current now as it was three thousand years ago—that blasphemous doctrine preached ofttimes even from Christian pulpits—that the want and suffering of the masses of mankind flow from a mysterious dispensation of Providence, which we may lament, but can neither quarrel with nor alter. Let him who hugs that doctrine to himself, him to whom it seems that the squalor and brutishness with which the very centers of our civilization abound are not his affair, turn to the example of that life. For to him who will look, yet burns the bush; and to him who will hear, again comes the voice: "The people suffer, who will lead them forth?"

Adopted into the immediate family of the supreme monarch and earthly god; standing almost at the apex of the social pyramid which had for its base those toiling millions; priest and prince in a land where prince and priest might revel in all delights—everything that life could offer to gratify the senses or engage the intellect was open to him.

What to him the wail of them who beneath the fierce sun toiled under the whips of relentless masters? Heard from granite colonnade or beneath cool linen awning, it was mellowed by distance to monotonous music. Why should he question the Sphinx of Fate, or quarrel with destinies the high gods had decreed? So had it always been, for ages and ages; so must it ever be. The beetle rends the insect, and the hawk preys on the beetle; order on order, life rises from death and carnage, and higher pleasures from lower agonies. Shall the man be better than nature? Soothing and restful flows the Nile, though underneath its placid surface finny tribes wage cruel war, and the stronger eat the weaker. . . .

Theirs to make bricks without straw; his a high place in the glorious procession that with gorgeous banners and glittering emblems, with clash of music and solemn chant, winds its shining way to dedicate the immortal edifice their toil has reared. Theirs the leek and the garlic, his to sit at the sumptuous feast. Why should he dwell on the irksomeness of bondage, he for whom the chariots waited, who might at will bestride the swift coursers of the Delta, or be borne on the bosom of the river with oars that beat time to songs?

It was no sudden ebullition of passion that caused Moses to turn his back on all this, and to bring the strength and knowledge acquired in a dominant caste to the lifelong service of the oppressed. The forgetfulness of self manifested in the smiting of the Egyptians shines through the whole life. In institutions that moulded the character of a people, in institutions that to this day make easier the lot of toiling millions, we may read the stately purpose.

Through all that tradition has given us of that life runs the same grand passion—the unselfish desire to make humanity better, happier, nobler. And the death is worthy of the life. Subordinating to the good of his people the natural disposition to found a dynasty, which in his case would have been so easy, he discards the claims of blood and calls to his place of leader the fittest man. Coming from a land where the rights of sepulture were regarded as all important, and the preservation of the body after death was the passion of life; among a people who were even then carrying the remains of their great ancestor, Joseph, to rest with his fathers, he yet conquered the last natural yearning and withdrew from the sight and sympathy of men to die alone and unattended, lest the idolatrous feeling, always ready to break forth, should in death accord him the superstitious reverence he had refused in life.

"No man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day." But while the despoiled tombs of the pharaohs mock the vanity that reared them, the name of the Hebrew who, revolting from their tyranny, strove for the elevation of his fellowmen, is yet a beacon light to the world.

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ON THE HORIZON

Opening Game in Zion

WILLIAM SCHACK

ONE June day in 1927 the Americans in Jerusalem, hitherto outwardly respectable, were seen making their way to the open spaces of the city wearing common caps, old pants, and abraded shoes. People heard settlers and tourists from the United States, who had only casually greeted each before, jabbering together with lodge-brother intimacy about something which a good polyglot Palestinian, who averaged a sort-of-command of seven languages, including English, could not follow for a single sentence.

The meaning of all this unusual activity became clear when the *Palestine Bulletin* announced that, in honor of the Fourth of July, the American community was going to stage an exhibition of their national pastime —the first ever to be held in the country. The place, the Maccabee football field; the time, four o'clock; everybody welcome, admission free. Even the Hebrew press carried an announcement, though it could find no better equivalent for "umpire" in the ancient tongue than the watered-down *shofet*—judge.

What the newspapers did not report was that for us who had organized the game, it was to be a joint celebration of the 151st anniversary of American independence and the 50th birthday of a notable baseball enthusiast who also happened to be Chancellor of the Hebrew University—Judah L. Magnes.

At the recent memorial meeting for Dr. Magnes in New York, James Marshall told how, some twenty years before the game reported here, Judah Magnes, then a young rabbi, found himself frustrated in his efforts to see the play-off game for the National League championship between the Giants and the Cubs. This was the game made necessary when the Giants' victory in the last scheduled game of the season was thrown out because of Fred Merkle's famous boner. He first tried to pay his way in, but all the tickets were sold. Coogan's Bluff, which offered a free if long-distance view of the field, was already packed. As he walked around the stadium wondering what to do, an ambulance clanged up to the gates; Magnes hopped on. The guards, impressed by the ambulance gong, opened the gates wide. Once inside, Magnes asked where the patient was. "What patient?" said the doctor. "I'm here to see the game!" The driver of the ambulance was the late Dr. Joseph Brettauer, the distinguished gynecologist, who told the story many years after.

BUT that day in Jerusalem, although Magnes and the rest of us had enthusiasm enough to build a league, mustering eighteen players was quite another matter. Qualifications were minimal; no questions were asked as to age, sex, religion, or previous experience. Certainly I was not the man to question anybody's credentials—I who hadn't touched a ball in eight or nine years, and who before then, on a high school team, had set a world's record for walks in a row, was it nineteen or twenty-one men? But despite a virtual house-to-house canvass we were still short-handed. We raided the rabbinical field for Simon Greenberg and Nachman Arnoff; we deprived

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This department—usually described as a place for reports on cultural and social trends—this month extends its boundaries to include WILLIAM SCHACK's description of what was perhaps the first Palestinian baseball game; and an article by ERIC WERNER on Jewish liturgical music. Mr. Schack (who wrote this article with seven "assists" from Sarah C. Schack) is less known as first baseman than as an art critic, author of *And He Sat Among the Ashes*, a biography of the painter Eilshemius. Mr. Schack is at present compiling an encyclopedia of plastics. Dr. Werner is a well-known musicologist on the faculty of the Hebrew Union School of Education and Sacred Music in New York City.

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Sir Ronald Storrs, Governor of Jerusalem, of his American secretary, Louis Lober, and the school system of Isidore Konowitz; we lured the visiting Dr. Maurice B. Hexter away from urgent business.

In Tel Aviv, we extracted Dr. Samuel Lewin-Epstein from his dental chambers. We ventured further north, to Haifa, where, a few years previously, a handful of American lads attending the Technical Institute had started the ball rolling with that abbreviated form of baseball known as one-a-cat. And still there were lacunae in the line-ups. Finally, someone had the inspiration to call on the Quaker school in Ramallah, and there we filled the quota.

We now needed only two things—equipment and conditioning; for, after all, we were not men of the *kvutzot* with flexible backs and hardened hands. There were not enough gloves among us—either fielders' gloves or mitts—to outfit a sandlot team; the woolen mittens that used to do for us boys in Brooklyn were not available in Jerusalem in July; and it was too late to import them from the States. Of the bats on hand, one was hardly more than a sublimated rolling-pin, the other was schoolboy size. Eventually another pair of bats turned up more near Polo Grounds standards.

For practice, we were generously offered the playing field of the St. George Cathedral School.* Unfortunately, some of the men were only free on Saturday; and their religious scruples kept them on the sidelines among the spectators. We didn't urge them too strongly to violate the Sabbath. If they were willing to take part in the game, rehearsed or unrehearsed, who were we other bush-leaguers to complain?

THE Fourth arrived. There was never any danger of the game being called on account of rain—not in Jerusalem in July. The one danger was that the temperature might be tropical. It was. Another trouble: only one of the Quaker school contingent showed up—the rest had to bone up for imminent exams. But replacements materialized somehow, and we took to the field to limber up and let the captains look us over before choosing up sides. If any talent scouts had been present, I doubt that there would have been any mad rush to sign most of us up. Captain Magnes of the "Reds," though much older than most of us, might have stood a chance. Tall and straight, and fast on his feet, he was in excellent physical shape from his long daily walks between his home in the American colony and his office on Mt. Scopus. Dr. E. M. Bluestone, captain of the "Blues," who was then Medical Director of Hadassah, was also in pretty good form. The most you could say for the rest of us was that we had two feet and two arms each, and were willing.

Not on my journalistic honor, and only on condition that no one wrongly mentioned or omitted or mentioned in the wrong line-up sues me, do I hesitantly present the line-ups. Here they are, as my fallible memory recalls them, and not necessarily in their correct positions, either:

Reds	*Blues*
J. L. Magnes 2b.	E. M. Bluestone, p.
S. Lewin-Epstein 1b.	N. Arnoff 2b.
"The Quaker"	W. Schack 1b.
M. B. Hexter	D. Magnes
Mrs. Le Bouvier	Louis Ehrlich
Sidney Goldstein (?)	S. Greenberg*
Louis Kaplan (?)	L. Lober
I. Konowitz	? ? ? ? ? ?
? ? ? ? ? ?	? ? ? ? ? ?†

At four o'clock sharp, we were ready. We took a last swig of the pop or lemonade that the three Magnes boys had hauled out in a pail, and the Blues scattered to their positions. Mr. Oscar Heiser, the American consul, was there to throw out the first ball. Behind the bat, as *shofet,* wearing his clerical collar, was the venerable Dr. Romain Butin, of the Catholic University in Washington, who was then annual professor and acting

* Dr. Hexter reminds us that shortly before the date of the game, an archaeological find of great consequence had taken place: the discovery of the Third Wall of Jerusalem. Ironically enough, this was found right in front of the American School of Archaeology. At the time the game took place, the discovery had been already covered over, and many of our foul balls hit the mound which that rubble now made. It would be nice to be able to write that the third base was on the Third Wall, but the line from third base to home plate did parallel the Wall.

*Dr. Greenberg assures me that he played lf, cf, or rf—whichever was furthest from the home plate.

†Dr. Hexter believes that Lee K. Frankel was in the game; Dr. Bluestone has his doubts; and while I am inclined to agree with the former, I have to be loyal to my captain.

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director of the American School of Oriental Research in Jerusalem. A breeze sprang up, not vigorous enough to cool us off, but enough to flutter the Stars and Stripes. The mascots were ready to chase the first foul ball or wild pitch.

"Batter up!" called the umpire.

AT THAT moment, a squadron of splendidly mounted Arabs fanned out over the rise above the field, their horses' hoofs clattering on the matted rocks. Just like in the movies! The day before, we had phoned the police to warn them what a baseball mob could be like, and there they were to preserve order. But where was the mob? There were just us players, our wives, our friends, and an assortment of mascots, making a total of—including the bottles of pop as Americans—a grand total of—but the figure must go unreported.

"Batter up!" cried Dr. Butin again.

The Reds got to our pitcher in a hurry. Added to that, our support was very much on the loose side. Bewildered, we watched while they repeatedly filled the bases and emptied them, until they had scored seven or nine runs. In our half of the first we also registered a few hits; but the Reds put up a strong, if not error-proof, defense and we only scored two or three times. I am not going to give a play-by-play account of the game. All I can say is that we played—like the Giants—strictly according to the rules. It was soon apparent that Captain Magnes, filling out his nine from last-minute dark horses, had managed to put together a team that decidedly outclassed us. As the innings slowly passed, the Reds began to make fewer errors and more hits, while the Blues began to make fewer hits and a hell of a lot more errors. How many a legitimate single of the Reds did our outfield turn into a triple! To make up for our deficiencies, we began to crab the umpire, who with priestly dignity and graciousness refrained from sending any of us to the clubhouse which wasn't there.

To strengthen his side, Captain Bluestone yanked off second the man who couldn't make a throw to home plate; replaced the catcher who dropped every ball by a man who only dropped every other ball; and shifted to the outfield the pitcher who seemed to have only the haziest idea of the location of the plate—it wasn't me! The changes didn't help too much.

THE final score was—nobody knows exactly what. One player is quite certain that it was 26-5; another is pretty sure that it was considerably higher on both sides; and in any case we all swore not to make the figure, whatever it was, public. And the final count in runs was not nearly so great as the sum of our bruises, aches, shaky knees, and strains. Anyhow, the game was a great success. We had had fun; we had celebrated two birthdays; and we had transplanted our national pastime. The Arabs didn't know the difference between us and the Dodgers; our wives certainly didn't; and the mascots were discreet. We drank more lemonade and pop; we missed our peanuts—no Abyssinian vendor had been go-getter enough to tempt us with pistachio nuts as substitutes; and we forgot our own performances in praising the star of the game—Captain Magnes.

The redoubtable Magnes had celebrated his 50th birthday by whacking out a double, a triple, and a homer; by stealing second, third, and home; finally, possibly to affirm his fallibility and save the faces of us young duffers—he had struck out once.

Immediately after the game, members of the Maccabees, the national athletic association, approached us for the use of our equipment. Soon they were making excellent progress in the game, and the language of the prophets was soon strained to produce the equivalents of "sock it on the nose," "lay it down," and—quite in the spirit of the prophets—"kill the umpire."

The following year there was another game on the Fourth, even more successful than the first. By now, twenty years later, because of us pioneers, no doubt that sweetest of all dreams today comes to young Israelis in the night—the dream of hitting a homer in the ninth with two outs and the bases full.

The True Source of Jewish Music

ERIC WERNER

"What is Beethoven's Ninth in comparison to a hit-song played upon a barrel-organ and a memory?"—Karl Kraus

THE controversy between traditionalism and modernism in Jewish liturgical music has in the last three or

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four years stirred many pens. Thus far the musicians and composers have had the floor, without achieving any marked success in establishing order among the reigning confusion. It should not then be considered presumption on the part of a Jewish musicologist if he tosses his hat in the ring.

In all articles and rejoinders, the fundamental question that has been posed is whether our liturgical music shall be "modern," or "traditional," in form, though some would avoid the issue by suggesting that it need only be "religious in spirit." The matter is, however, not nearly so simple, and what is overlooked are the two principles essential to an intelligent discussion of the subject:

1. Synagogue music is not a unique art-form; it is a *functional art* on the borderline between folklore and art-music. Like the Gregorian chant of the Catholic Church, the liturgical music of Judaism in the past was a consciously stylized type of elevated folksong. This fact is borne out by countless tunes, especially by the so-called *missinai* melodies which originated in the Rhineland during the 12th to 14th centuries, and which absorbed elements of Burgundian art-music into the folksong framework of an earlier Jewish musical tradition.

2. Traditionalism was not always an essential demand, historically. There is no evidence whatsoever that the psalmists based their melodies upon "tradition"; and the same holds true for the Temple and the early synagogue. It was not until the Gaonic Age (9th century) that the attitude of the authorities changed, a change marked by the ascendancy of the appointed *hazan*. Since the *hazan* had to invent melodies for the new metrical compositions of the prayerbook (*piyutim*), the danger of losing the ancient tradition impressed itself upon the rabbis. Still, they did nothing to enforce a musical tradition; their activities in this respect were confined to limiting the introduction of new poems and melodies, efforts which were doomed to failure.

When we talk of a musical tradition today, we are really referring to a long established principle of *association*. Practically every Jew associates the first bars of Kol Nidre with Yom Kippur, the characteristic motif of the Tal Kaddish with Passover and Succoth, the cadences of the Lamentations with Tisha b'av. This fact is not new; the Jewish composers of the Middle Ages already leaned upon this associative function of their music in establishing a number of "leading" motifs which pervade the whole Jewish year, and the rabbis classified the most important tunes according to their liturgical function: praise, penitence, supplication, meditation, etc. These leading motifs carry even today (and they must have been much more effective in an age that knew practically no other music than that of the synagogue) a power comparable to the emotional persuasiveness of a Midrash or of a homily.

Do we possess any modern music which, by force of its purely religious ardor, could replace or supersede the associative power of traditional music?

The Roman Church faced this same question during the Renaissance. At that time Palestrina represented the "progressive" element, although he was still strongly bound to the Gregorian tradition. At the Council of Trent, the Church, after lengthy disputes, yielded to the contemporary school and permitted music that was not entirely Gregorian to be used in its services. This was the signal for "spiritual, contemporary, autonomous" music. Within two centuries, the liturgical music of the Church was fast approaching chaos and disintegration, in spite of its centralized ritual authority and its rigidly organized Scholae Cantorum. It took the concerted efforts of priests, musicologists, and the Vatican to regulate the flood of secularism and liturgical anarchy that threatened to disrupt the uniformity of the Catholic ritual. The great Benedictine musicologists of Solesmes took it upon themselves to reinstitute the authentic tradition of the Church, the Gregorian chant, and their efforts were crowned by a series of papal decrees in which the traditional music was sternly stressed and placed in the foreground of the ritual. In doing so, "contemporary" or modern music was not prohibited in the Church, but it had to be based upon the modes of the Gregorian chant. Said Pope Pius X in his *Motu Proprio*: "An ecclesiastical piece of music is the more ecclesiastical and liturgical, the more its structure, its spirit, and its mood approximates that of the Gregorian chant."

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From the history of Jewish music we may choose three instances, from among many, of attempts to introduce "modern" music into the liturgy:

Solomone Rossi il Ebreo was the first composer of stature who wrote art-music for the synagogue, encouraged by so outstanding a person as Rabbi Yehuda Leon Modena (about 1618). Rossi's music is noble, religious, often of enchanting beauty, but it is in no way based upon tradition. And what remained of it? Twenty years after his death his music was forgotten and to this day it rests (with the exception of a few performances and a faulty new edition by Samuel Naumbourg) in dusty archives, food for worms and scholars.

Sholom Fried, a fine synagogue composer at the end of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th century, attempted to combine traditional elements with the structure and melodic style of Haydn and Mozart. In only a few cases did he attain appreciable results; the great majority of his compositions are an almost ridiculous hodge-podge of Jewish (traditional) and contemporary Western art-music. His music was soon forgotten and of his more than five hundred extant manuscripts, not one has been published.

Almost in the language of Kurt List (COMMENTARY, November 1948) spoke Mr. Israel Lowy, alias Israel Metz, Israel Glogau, etc., in the preface of his *Chants Religieux* (posthumously edited in Paris, 1862). He was perfectly familiar with our musical tradition, but he chose to break away from it in favor of music that expressed the "religious spirit" in a "general way," that is, in the fashion of his time, in the style of Mozart, Cherubini, and of contemporary French opera composers. All his endeavors to make synagogal music "contemporary" and "universal" melted away within fifteen to twenty years after his death. Not one of his compositions is performed today.

On the other hand, there are the names of Sulzer, Naumbourg, Lewandowsky, or Dunajewski: how can we account for the fact that a great deal of their music has remained alive, notwithstanding their romantic or operatic, Schubert-like or Mendelssohn-like style and diction? It is not too difficult to answer: each of these four men was aware of the *liturgical*, not merely "religious," function of synagogue music, and each of them subordinated his music to the demands of the *liturgy;* moreover, they were fully cognizant of the associative power of our musical tradition. Hence their music, whether written originally under the banner of moderate liberalism (Sulzer, Lewandowsky) or Orthodoxy (Naumbourg, Dunajewsky), eventually was accepted by *all* wings of Occidental Judaism; Orthodox congregations sing Sulzer's *Kedusha* or Lewandowsky's *Zocharti Loch,* and Reform congregations are familiar with many of Naumbourg's or Dunajewsky's traditional pieces.

THESE instances should indicate quite clearly that we are not confronted with the alternatives of concrete (program) and abstract (absolute) music. Nor do we face the choice that Dr. Kurt List consistently and erroneously poses between "ghetto tradition" on one side, and "valid contemporary art" on the other side. Dr. List's amazing arguments are that (1) "the Hebrew text is not widely understood by the audience" and that (2) "even when Hebrew words are understood, they lose their program value through repetition and familiarity," so that if you set music to Hebrew words, that music need not reflect the spirit of the text, since the words are not understood anyway, or have lost their significance by constant repetition. If these arguments were valid, the proponents of liturgical music would be in a difficult position indeed.

Fortunately, our sages, about sixteen centuries before Dr. List's time, anticipated that kind of argument by declaring: "When you pray, do not make your prayer a mere routine, but a plea before God for mercy and grace" (Aboth 2:13), and "mechanical reading of the text of the *Sh'ma,* without mental concentration upon its contents . . . is of no avail" (Ber. 2:1). The rabbinic injunctions against the *Bracha le-vatala* (empty, invalid prayer) likewise fall into this category. Consequently, Dr. List's distinction between concrete and abstract music is in no way compatible with Jewish liturgical tradition: by his criterion only the Hasidic aspect of our musical tradition would be admissible—an artificial retreat to a by now alien civilization.

(It is interesting to note, too, that the Catholic Church also has a repetitious mass-ritual in Latin, which is not generally under-

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stood; can it be said that the great Catholic composers of masses ignored the text because of this?)

THIS is the alternative Dr. List poses before us: either high art-music à la Schoenberg, perhaps even Bloch, or else Hasidic-Eastern Jewish chants. For him, a middle road does not exist.

Because of either a lack of knowledge or a complete misunderstanding of the real facts, Dr. List states in his latest article (COMMENTARY, February 1949): "The great tradition of authentic cantorial music is gradually dying out, partly because of the reforming tendencies of the 19th century, partly because of the decreasing interest among modern worshippers in the qualities proper to it. . . . It is true that some of the modern composers . . . have drawn much inspiration from cantorial sources, but it is equally true that the community has remained unaffected. For the synagogue is visited today by worshippers out of touch with the ancient sacred sources and acquainted almost exclusively with the modern textures of late 18th-, 19th- and 20th-century music."

Dr. List conveys here the impression that the "modern textures" of the 18th, 19th, and 20th centuries are entirely alien to ancient tradition. This is an error. Actually, most of the good synagogue composers of these times made use of old traditions and it was the much-smeared 19th century that produced works like Abraham Baer's *Baal Tefilla,* the first scholarly thesaurus of the genuine musical tradition of the Ashkenazim. We may feel today that these men did not do full justice to the intrinsic spirit of the tradition, but we must never forget that they did their very best to save and to preserve as much as possible from the utter deterioration that had fouled synagogue music since the beginning of the 18th century.

Hence, people who are familiar with the "modern textures" of the 19th and 20th centuries do know a considerable part of Jewish musical tradition. They are, consequently, not "out of touch with the ancient sacred sources"; and Dr. List's entire argument collapses.

Schoenberg, the great artist, is no food for the synagogue. For liturgical music, a *functional* art, must never deter the congregants from attending worship. Yet I am sure that if Schoenberg's music were played in our temples, our uneducated Bœothians would flee in haste. To a certain extent, however, his technique might be employed with advantage by our contemporary synagogue composers. Yet, their efforts in this direction would have to be confined to an area that is compatible with the spirit of our musical tradition.

The true remedy lies in the middle course —in the evolution of, and education in, the true tradition of our sacred music.

Mrs. Hilda Pinson (*Menorah Journal,* Winter 1948) approaches the question with fewer preconceptions. After summarizing Cantor Jassinowsky's and Mr. Sholem Secunda's attacks on the "modernists" for their lack of *nusach* (tradition), she goes on to analyze objectively the present situation in our synagogues and temples. It is only when she quotes Mr. Helfman's statement, "God will understand, God understands all artists, conservative or polytonal, all artists who seek sincerely and competently to express Him in sound," that she takes sides with "contemporary synagogue music." Her summary is fair, but not conclusive: "Certainly the mechanical utilization of liturgical modes alone cannot insure an inner spirituality to music. And tradition which carries no conviction will remain hollow."

This is precisely the point where the musicologist stops, asking himself whether, in fact, our tradition has been stagnant and hollow, or evolutionary and belief-full.

THE great philosopher Hermann Cohen attempted to establish a criterion for our attitude towards the contemporary Gentile civilization. According to him, either an "active" or a "passive" assimilation takes place in the process of cultural adjustment. The "active" assimilation is the act of assimilating something to oneself, digesting and integrating it as a plant assimilates light and elements out of the air. This is a necessary and constructive process. "Passive" assimilation, on the other hand, is the act of giving oneself away to a strong external attraction; thus, when an organic body decomposes, its constituent elements form new compounds with the surrounding earth, thereby disintegrating the original body. That body is

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dead, because it can no longer assimilate actively.

Applying this criterion to our liturgical music, it can be said that up to the 16th and early 17th centuries we were able to assimilate actively and integrate certain musical elements and styles of the environment in our basic tradition. Thereafter began the decline, which ended in a chaos of passive assimilation and disintegration in the first third of the 19th century. It took the concerted efforts of men like Sulzer, Naumbourg, Lewandowsky, Weintraub, and E. Birnbaum to rejuvenate our musical tradition. We may no longer feel fully satisfied with their results because "each generation seeks the Lord in its own way."

But what has been *our* method to create a new spiritual music for the synagogue? Did we go back to the sources, as did Sulzer and his followers, or the great renovators of the Gregorian chant? Did we at least seriously study the history and essence of Jewish music? On the basis of my personal experience, I am bound to answer these questions with an emphatic negative. Certainly, there are some praiseworthy exceptions, like Cantor Gershon Ephros, the editor of the *Cantorial Anthology,* an indefatigable student of old Jewish musical manuscripts. And there are a few more, but their number is very, very small.

The majority have been, for the most part, content with promoting, publicizing, publicly discussing the problems of Jewish music—usually without any solid knowledge of their subject. The practice of inviting outstanding musicians to compose Jewish liturgical music is a worthwhile procedure only if these composers have sufficiently familiarized themselves with the history and the essence of our liturgy and its sacred music. Otherwise, it leads again to "passive assimilation." For there cannot be an "independent, abstract" music of the synagogue: *its music has, under all circumstances, to be subservient to the liturgy,* to its text as well as its spirit, not to mention to the seasonal modes which characterize our tradition and carry so strong an associative power. The call to all friends of genuine Jewish music is, therefore, *ad fontes*—to the sources. When we shall have a solid and detailed knowledge of the development of our liturgical music, then it may be possible to integrate its elements into a pattern of truly contemporary music without losing our identity. Contemporary music, however, is all too often identical with ephemeral music. What we need are lasting values, not passing fads.

TRUE, there have been passing fads in the history of our musical tradition, and it is exactly the ephemeral creations of past centuries that constitute the large body of our "pseudo-tradition." It would be folly to accept all synagogue music which has been handed down to us as *prima facie* specimens of genuine tradition. In all centers of Jewish life in Europe, certain styles, molded after the then fashionable patterns, arose and claimed attention. Rabbi Joel Sirkes (1561-1640) gave vent to his annoyance with this state of affairs in these words: "When a *hazan* imitates the musical fashion of the Gentiles, then he takes every care to impress the 'new music' so urgently upon his congregation that one might believe he had succeeded in rebuilding the Temple *and its music.*"

Two famous instances of pseudo-tradition may be cited here. The first is the well-known Hanukkah melody of *Moos Tzur* or "Rock of Ages," which is actually, as I have shown elsewhere, a mixture of three German melodies, compiled between 1600 and 1650, without any attempt to integrate them into the specific spirit or modality of Jewish tradition. The second is an entire group of songs: the so-called *Freilachs* and *Niggunim* of the Hasidim. They are all, almost without exception, more or less strongly modified versions of Greco-Slavonic *Hirmi,* many of which may be found in the Russian Synodal Chant book. It is true that they have been adjusted to already existing Jewish traditions by such devices as embellishments, the introduction of certain Jewish cadences, etc., but their melodies are not based upon a genuine Jewish musical heritage.

It does not follow, of course, that we should henceforth eliminate all such tunes from our services; both the *Moos Tzur* and the Hasidic *Freilachs* and *Niggunim* have the power of intellectual and emotional association, which is, after all, of paramount importance for our liturgical music. But we should at least *know* what is genuine and what is borrowed, what is ancient and

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what is new, so that when attempting to create a solid and authentic foundation for the enrichment of our traditional music we need not become victims of fallacious views or nostalgic illusions.

HERE are the points where I find myself in complete agreement with Dr. List's views. He is perfectly justified in writing: "The activities of the music section of the National Jewish Welfare Board proved, also, to be of great significance, not so much for what they were . . . but because of its assumption of the role of 'official' spokesman of Jewish music."

While I am a member of the Jewish Music Council, to whose activities Dr. List refers, I cannot close my eyes to the dangers that would beset the cause of Jewish music if the Music Council were actually to appoint itself as its official custodian. The ancient question *Quis custodiet ipsos custodes?* (who will watch the watchmen themselves?) is too urgent to be ignored in this case. For the Jewish Music Council has done little to elevate the musical taste of the Jewish masses; it has more often been content to stoop to their level than ready to face a serious and noble challenge, the education of the musical taste of its constituents and adherents.

I also endorse Dr. List's criticism of the wide divergence between theory and practice, in particular when he refers to the high standards set forth in the pronunciamentos of our "official" musical leaders, and the pathetically low implementations of these high-sounding principles. Dr. List's bold attack upon the Jewish commercial music sheltered in the sphere of the Yiddish theater is certainly meritorious; but I doubt that it will amount to more than a soliloquy.

IT WILL be one of the most important tasks of the newly established School of Jewish Sacred Music in New York to create a scientific basis for the exploration and evaluation of our musical tradition. The school, which operates under the auspices of the Hebrew Union College with the cooperation of the Society for the Advancement of Jewish Liturgical Music, opened in the fall of last year. Most serious attention is being paid to the study of *nusach* and cantillation, the two pillars of synagogue music. A solution of the dilemma of tradition versus modernism can be found only if we possess sufficient knowledge and insight to understand fully what constitutes our musical tradition and what its real function is. In the meantime, it would be best if we abstained from apodictic statements and dilettante analyses; they are more likely to obscure the real problem than to elucidate it.

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THE STUDY OF MAN

NEW PATHS IN AMERICAN JEWISH HISTORY

Afterthoughts on a Conference

OSCAR HANDLIN

THE low status of writing in American Jewish history has been an open secret for two decades or more, but only recently has dissatisfaction become general and vocal. The works that held the field, with few exceptions, were, it was already recognized, steeped in apologetics and in a false provincial pride; these were not such as to give the Jews an adequate sense of their own past or to give Americans generally an adequate sense of the role of an important ethnic group in the development of the United States.

This writer has been only one of many who have deplored the present situation; that my article, "Our Unknown American Jewish Ancestors" (COMMENTARY, February 1948), severely criticizing prevailing history writing, occasioned considerable interest and lively discussion, was due more to the increasing sense of the urgency of its theme than to any particular merit in its presentation.

Partly in response to such self-searchings and complaints, partly out of their own interest in encouraging a larger flow of sound and relevant history writing for its own pages, the editors of COMMENTARY called a conference to consider the problems of interpreting and recording the Jewish experience in America. In May 1948, twenty-eight scholars from all parts of the country assembled in New York and spent three lengthy sessions in an informal review of the whole subject. The survey was fruitful. Many participants met each other for the first time and found the opportunity, in free and candid discussion, to become acquainted with a diversity of attitudes and of current lines of research.

It was my good fortune to play the part of chairman at the conference, a part that enabled me to take in the various points of view, if not impartially, at least comprehensively. Having had several months to think over what was said, and having recently reviewed the entire record of the proceedings, it may be worthwhile to set down some impressions of one practising historian of the conference and of the current status of the questions considered.

THE participants in the conference fell into four groups: historians who had devoted themselves specifically to the study of the Jews in America; historians concerned with the general history of the United States; sociologists interested in the problems of race and ethnic groupings; and a number of thinkers troubled

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The present increased interest among social scientists in the relations of immigrant groups to a changing American society, and the current desire of Jews to have a record of their experience on the American scene, would seem to create a favorable climate for writing history about American Jews. Nevertheless, there has been little activity of any real quality in the field in recent years. To inquire into the reasons for this situation, and to encourage thinking and creativity, COMMENTARY last May held an informal conference of interested scholars and writers. OSCAR HANDLIN, assistant professor of social sciences and a member of the departments of History and Social Relations at Harvard, here discusses the problems of writing American Jewish history as they emerged in the conference, and offers some comments of his own. Professor Handlin is the author of *Boston's Immigrants* (1941), *The Immigrant in American Politics* (1944), *Commonwealth* (1946), and most recently has edited *This Was America*, an anthology of writings by travellers in America. He was born in 1915 and attended Brooklyn College.

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by the present situation of American Jewry and anxious to emphasize the contemporary relevance of the historical data.* The interplay of observations and ideas from these dissimilar sources made for stimulating and provocative discussion.

Despite the differences in approach, there was essential agreement upon the central point, that we live in abysmal ignorance of the real past of American Jewry. What passes now for history is an accumulation of details of little consequence, only slightly related either to the real problems of the present or to the real people of the past.

There was also substantial agreement as to the causes of this deplorable condition. American Jews, like other American immigrants, were until recently deficient in history-mindedness. All newcomers, eager to establish a sense of belonging, have been more anxious to forget than to remember the past out of which they have risen and which they imagine has separated them from the whole community.

Intertwined with this reticence about not-quite-proper antecedents, there was, in the case of the Jews, a suspicion that, even if there were no skeletons there, it was safer not to expose the contents of the family closet to the gaze of strangers. After all, it was better not to supply potential anti-Semites with too much information (happy days when it seemed anti-Semites needed *substance* to their charges!). Consequently, American Jewish history was left in the inadequate hands of the polite amateur who justified and pointed with pride for the benefit of a handful of interested devotees.

Under these circumstances, it was hardly surprising that this field of study failed to profit by the development of scientific history in the last half-century. Academic historians, lacking the language equipment to engage directly in such research, depended for their impressions upon the writings of the few amateur specialists; and those writings were not such as to win much space in general works or to make the subject seem attractive as a field of future investigation. The number of Jews among professional historians has not been large. And young men who have entered the field in recent years have often been unwilling to strengthen an identification that might retard professional advancement. In that respect, the fate of the historiography of the Jews has been like that of all other American ethnic groups—disorderly, unrelated to any larger developments, not even certain what are the proper questions to ask, much less able to answer them.

These old attitudes need no longer hold us back. Historians, in general, even the most academic, are now fully aware of the importance of the role played by immigrant groups in the American past. If the writers of history are backward in understanding and describing that role, it is less through ill-will than lack of knowledge. Anxious to know, they need help from those who can supply the knowledge.

THE conference early turned its attention to some of the matters about which American historians have pleaded ignorance. Two themes in particular ran through the deliberations—the nature of the Jewish group and of the internal developments within it, and the relations of the Jewish group to the general currents of American life about it. Around these themes were elaborated a wide range of meaningful questions.

To begin with, the problem of defining the American Jews, at first sight simple, turned out to involve the most profound complexities. It was not at all clear to what extent it was proper to deal with American Jews as a group. The solidarity of Jews, it appeared, was often so tenuous, the divisions among them so marked, that in many important respects it seemed more significant to deal with sub-groups within the group than with the group as a whole.

The preponderance of opinion at the con-

*Hannah Arendt, New York City; Daniel Bell, University of Chicago; Carl Bridenbaugh, Institute of Early American History and Culture; Elliot E. Cohen, COMMENTARY; Henry David, Queens College; Moshe Davis, Jewish Theological Seminary; Morris Fine, Jewish Library of Information, American Jewish Committee; Lee M. Friedman, American Jewish Historical Society; Nathan Glazer, COMMENTARY; Nathan Goldberg, American Jewish Congress; Louis Gottschalk, University of Chicago; Solomon Grayzel, Jewish Publication Society; Hyman B. Grinstein, Yeshiva College; Oscar Handlin, Harvard University; Sidney Hook, New York University; Guido Kisch, *Historia Judaica;* Bertram Korn, Hebrew Union College; Harry L. Lurie, Council of Jewish Federations and Welfare Funds; Rollin G. Osterweis, Yale University; Charles A. Reznikoff, New York City; Edward N. Saveth, American Jewish Committee; Arthur M. Schlesinger, Harvard University; Leo Srole, Columbia University; Joshua Trachtenberg, Temple Covenant of Peace; Max Weinreich, Yiddish Scientific Institute; Louis Wirth, University of Chicago; Harvey Wish, Western Reserve University; Donald Young, Social Science Research Council.

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ference was disposed to accept the traditional tripartite division into Sephardim, Germans, and East Europeans. But even those who spoke most vigorously for this view did not claim that such designations were based upon nationality or nativity; a plethora of examples was available to prove how numerous were the Germans and Poles among the Sephardim, the Russians and Hungarians among the Germans. Yet once we penetrated beyond the conventional terms, we found it difficult to describe the Sephardim, Germans, and Russians with any degree of precision, either as to national origin or religious and cultural pattern, much less to explain the emergence of those differentiations.

We could grant that in the 1880's there were different kinds of Jews to whom those names were applied. But if nativity did not explain group membership—if some "Spanish" Jews were born in Germany and some "Germans" in Poland—what did account for these neat categories? Surely these groupings were not of the same nature as earlier ones in Europe. The kind of legal distinctions that kept apart Portuguese and Alsatian Jews in 18th-century France, or Sephardim and Germans in Hamburg, could not exist in the United States.

It is far more likely that the lines that divided American Jewry were not brought from across the Atlantic but rather reflected the circumstances of settlement in the New World. Probably these differences grew out of some form of social stratification. The conference indulged in interesting speculations on the relevance, in fixing the strata among Jews, of economic achievement, of social mobility, of cultural differences, of period of arrival. But these remained at best inspired guesses; no ordered body of data was available to test them.

In this unavailable information lies a clue to the effects of stratification within the Jewish group and perhaps within other similar ethnic groups. Enough instances were cited from the history of Jewish social clubs, of charitable associations, and of other communal organizations, to show that the development of such activities was markedly influenced by the existence of divisions within the community. Why congregations moved from one part of the city to another, why philanthropy was so long in being centralized, why lodges proliferated as they did, these are all questions, the answers to which are related to the basic reality that the Jews have not formed a single group, but were always significantly segmented.

Insight into the nature of intra-group stratification would also throw light on such other significant questions as the rate and means of assimilation or adjustment to the society outside the group, the transmission and transformation of traditional values, and the incidence of culture changes. Did the Russian Jew of 1900, seeking an American pattern to which to conform, find his model in the Yankee, or in the German Jew? Did the needle worker seek to emulate Rockefeller or Jacob Schiff or Joseph Schaffner? Unfortunately we know practically nothing as to the source of innovations in American Jewish life, nothing as to where standards of behavior and thought originate.

To complicate the problem still further, a number of speakers pointed to the obvious but often neglected fact that Jewish affiliations were rarely direct and simple. Thus, in 1870, at the end of the Franco-Prussian War, many Jews participated actively in the celebrations in America in honor of the Kaiser's victory. These people acted then as Germans, just as on Yom Kippur they acted as Jews, and on the Fourth of July as Americans in a more general sense. (At the conference, the only examples cited were those of Germans. In retrospect, however, it seems to me, instances could as well have been drawn from other nationalities. Thus many radical Jews after 1905 retained a deep interest in Russian and Polish affairs. Others, during the First World War, were seriously concerned with the emergence of the new national states of Czechoslovakia and Hungary.) In the social activities that organized their lives, Jews could make a variety of choices; significant gradations in affiliation were possible.

Precisely because many Jews did not confine all their activities to within the Jewish group, we will not learn much about the implications of their affiliations from Jewish sources alone. To understand why some Jews developed a complete associational life of their own, it would not be enough to examine the Jewish associations they joined. We would also have to know the extent to which Jews also participated in other communal activities, in *Turnvereine*, in Sokol Clubs, and in Masonic societies. And we would have to know the circumstances under which Jews refrained from affiliating with any kind of Jewish organization at all.

Consideration of each problem inevitably led us head on into the technical aspects of coping

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with it. Yet even purely technical questions immediately became complex.

How many Jews were there at any given period in the United States? The conference spent a good deal of time on the simple problem of how to count. For we discovered we were in disagreement as to the number of Jews at different times. Estimates of the population in 1880, for instance, ranged from 250,000 to one million. Nor was it immediately apparent how one would go about ascertaining a more precise figure. How would one identify a Jew? No government statistics ever took account of this category. And enough cases were adduced of non-Jewish Goldbergs, Rosenbergs, and Israels to show that in the 19th century at least, name alone was no criterion. (An interesting tangential historical problem is what happened to those non-Jewish bearers of names now taken as distinctively Jewish.)

Some members of the conference were inclined to identify as Jews only those with demonstrable organizational affiliations. But this solution would be no solution at all, for it would leave unanswered the questions of why some Jews affiliated with Jewish organizations and others did not, of why some identified themselves with the group and others did not. Such a reckoning would also make it impossible to make any judgment as to the rate of conversion and the ability of the group to maintain itself.

Without minimizing the difficulty of the task, one ventures to suggest that it is possible, given time and thought, to identify the Jews who remained outside the organizational fold, and to discover the history of their adjustment not only to their co-religionists but to the larger community. I may add that a sizeable percentage of the conferees supported this view.

The need for keeping in mind the unaffiliated Jews was stressed again when the conference focused on a second series of questions involving the relationship of Jews to the life of the whole society. Affiliated or not, members of organizations or not, Jews, by their very presence in the United States, influenced the development of American culture; an adequate Jewish history would certainly have to cope with the problem of describing the interaction of members of the group and American society.

We have had lists in plenty of notable Jewish contributors to American culture. But such data have never been examined with a view to discovering the extent to which the impact of an individual upon the culture is affected by his ethnic affiliations. Was the role of the great inventor, artist, merchant, greatly altered by the fact of his Jewishness? It would be interesting to know whether significant differences existed among the Jewish Gimbel, the Irish Stewart, the Yankee Wanamaker, or between Hearst and Pulitzer, or among Steinmetz and Edison and Pupin. And were those differences, if they existed, aspects of specifically Jewish qualities or of ethnic qualities in general?

Yet this is only the simplest level on which the question may be asked. For such individuals were exceptional and they exercised their influence in the open light of public attention. The great mass of American Jews occupied humbler stations; they were laborers, artisans, petty shopkeepers. Individually they were undistinguished; was there anything that distinguished them in the mass as they reacted to American life?

The conference devoted much time to evaluating the role of the Jews in the American labor movement. To what extent, it was asked, did such associations as the garment unions acquire their distinctive characteristics from the fact that their membership was once largely Jewish? Was the unique development of collective bargaining in the clothing industries the outcome of some unity of feeling on the part of Jewish employers and employes; or was it simply a product of the form of organization of the trade? Persuasive arguments were made on both sides of these questions. Proof of any position was more difficult; for information in this area is fragmentary. There are a number of biographies and a few official histories of individual unions, but little more. There have been few efforts to deal with the mass membership of these organizations; it is hard even now to speak with certainty of the motivation of those who joined. (It certainly would be desirable, toward that end, to complete the pioneer work in this subject, Yivo's history of the Jewish labor movement, and to make it available in English translation or abridgment.)

The problem of the influence of the Jewish masses upon American life exists in every field in which Jews were active. In dealing with Jewish culture, the Jewish press, theater, or literature, there is always the temptation

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to define as Jewish only those works using Yiddish or Hebrew as vehicles of expression. But American Jews were also intimately involved in a culture not exclusively their own. They read and wrote for English language newspapers, they acted in and were audiences at English plays. Jews, in these activities, were not identified as Jews. Yet it would be surprising if their Jewishness did not make a difference, did not, for example, decisively influence such "neutral" media as the Broadway stage or significant sectors of New York journalism. As in the case of the unions, it is important to estimate the effects upon the development of American institutions and cultural forms of the participation of Jews in them.

If we knew the answers to such questions, we might better be able to describe the process of acculturation, the means through which all newcomers got accustomed to America and American ways. Some participants at the conference were willing to assert that the Jews advanced more rapidly in Americanization than did other immigrant groups; other speakers refused to make such judgments on the basis of the available evidence. But, in any case, the more important consideration is how the process operated, what happened to the human beings involved.

There was a time when this process was regarded in quite simple terms, like a change in clothes; immigrants took off Old World ways, put on those of the New World. Conventionally, Americanization was then described in terms of the disappearance of separate immigrant institutions and the integration of the immigrants into more and more general ones.

We know enough now about all immigrants to be aware that acculturation was far more complex. Separate newspapers, places of worship, clubs, and associations by no means always retarded Americanization; sometimes they seem actually to have facilitated it by easing the adjustment of individuals to the whole society. But it is impossible to speak precisely of the problem until there have been investigations of the interaction between the milieu and the institutions existing within it. It was asserted, for instance, that the trend in many congregations away from Orthodoxy to Conservatism was related to the social mobility and to the Americanization of their members. That hypothesis would certainly be worth testing and its implications certainly worth analyzing.

In this respect, it was necessary to keep in mind all the significant variables which rendered dangerous any generalizations from particular isolated cases. It was pointed out that differences in size altered the experience of various communities. New York was a problem unique unto itself. But it was also risky to speak of what happened in large cities like Philadelphia and Boston as if that were relevant to the small ones like New Haven or Lancaster. And it was also necessary to take account of the circumstances of isolated Jews in rural environments and in very small towns.

Nor, in these discussions, was it possible to avoid noticing that each period of settlement seemed to have characteristics of its own. Many at the conference spoke of 1880 as the watershed, the decisive line of division, not only because of the change in place of origin of the immigrants, but also because the quantitative difference in numbers altered the nature of the Jewish situation. (One might also add because America after 1880 was different from America earlier.) It is only with a firm understanding of all these considerations that we will be able to arrive at sensible conclusions as to the role of acculturation in the settlement of Jews in America. Merely to enumerate them is to indict the kind of history we have had up to now.

THE conference was, in the first instance, focused upon the past. But inevitably it uncovered the relationship of the past to the present. For the Jews of America today must take account of their history in estimating their own position. Implicit in the actions of every individual and of every institution is a judgment as to whether the American experience is only a passing phase in the long history of the persisting group, or whether the group itself changes under the impact of new circumstances. At the conference, arguments were heard on both sides of the question. But there was no disputing the fact that the judgment will be better made if it rests on an accurate, thoughtful view of the past.

A clear historical analysis would illuminate the general nature of the forces that hold the group together. In a view of the recent past, so dominated by the problems of anti-Semitism, it is easy to suppose that Jews continue to affiliate with the group because they are pushed into it; so, Sartre says, the Jew is a creature of the anti-Semite. Yet it would also be worth examining the alternative proposition, that there

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is a pull, some attractiveness, some basic values in the common inheritance that draw members into the group. Historical analysis of the development of culture and of institutions might throw light on the relative strength of the push and of the pull.

Such historical perspective has a critical function in our society where many Jews now call themselves Jews not for the purposes of traditional religious observance, but for some other reason. People whose ties to the group are ethnic, the recollection of a common ancestry, find it particularly important to know their own history, to seek in the past the sources of their present consciousness as Jews. They may be concerned only with the pressures of anti-Semitism. They may be troubled only by the answers they must give children who demand an explanation of the vague line that divides them from their neighbors. But unless they have a clear conception of the past of the group, they will fall victims to disastrous myths and remain torn by cultural and personal conflicts.

THE wide areas of agreement as to what were the fundamental problems were gratifying in view of the diversity of the participants in the conference. The sociologists, it is true, did not always see eye to eye with the historians. The former were inclined to weigh the importance of various subjects in terms of contemporary relevance and argued the necessity of using historical data to answer questions of present-day importance. The historians, on the other hand, were more disposed to start from the available material, organizing it in terms of the questions of the past, in the faith that an accurate whole picture of the past would throw light on the present. This disagreement involves important problems in the theory of method. But in practice it was generally reduced to a matter of emphasis; in actual discussion, we discovered historians and sociologists were in adequate agreement—even if for different reasons.

More significant and, in my opinion, quite dangerous, was the attitude that cropped up here and there that historical writing ought to be shaped by certain preconceived judgments as to its conclusions. The assumption was occasionally expressed that only those who agreed on conclusions could see eye to eye on the substance of history. In arguments as to the uniqueness of the Jews in world history and in American history, this view resulted in a kind of particularism exceedingly misleading in a society that comprehends the experiences of many ethnic groups. One speaker, for instance, pointed to the relations of the Jews with Israel as absolutely without parallel. Yet familiarity with other immigrant peoples similarly situated in the United States would have revealed striking resemblances. The Irish, the Bohemians, and the Germans had each a national home for which to fight, which fired imaginations, taxed purses, and kept alive a kind of nostalgic revolt against America.

The more profitable course will be to emphasize the bodies of information upon which we can agree, leaving in abeyance conclusions and questions of ultimate judgment. For whenever the conference dug down to the bedrock of concrete historical data, its discussions were fruitful and enlightening. And everyone was agreed on one basic point: the utility of a systematic survey of the needs and opportunities for research in American Jewish history.

Several speakers pointed to the substantial achievements that resulted from such surveys in other fields. A project that would map out the unexplored areas in our past, it was agreed, would be an invaluable guide in the work of scholars for the next decade. It would capitalize on the current interest in the universities in the history of ethnic groups and open up attractive lines of investigation to graduate students and young writers. It might thus lay the foundation for a series of books that would uncover the history of America's Jews. Such an achievement would have value to the Jews themselves as a revelation of their own antecedents. It would also have a larger value; it could supply a case study of the development of group life to an American society which now increasingly becomes aware that men do not move as isolated individuals in the community, but act in relationship to the whole through a life in one or several groups.

THE value of such a guide would, of course, depend upon the availability of scholars to use it; and the attraction of talent into the field of American Jewish history is, to this day, much more difficult. The most likely course is one which would see the specialists in Jewish history working in close enough contact with other American historians to be aware of the main developments in the larger field. The logical agency for establishing such a rapport is the American Jewish Historical Society. But that

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organization will not fill the role unless it undergoes a radical reform. At present it is still bogged down in its own parochial little interests, cut off from the main streams of American intellectual life—for that matter, from the main streams of Jewish intellectual life.

There were hopeful signs of such a change last year when the society acquired the financial sponsorship of the National Jewish Welfare Board. There was also a change in the administration, and the *Publications*, which had been appearing at irregular intervals over the past half-century, turned into a quarterly journal.

But the changes have not gone far enough. Too much effort the first year went into pamphlets popularizing the old clichés; and the caliber of contributions to the quarterly was not high. Most disappointing was the revelation at the annual meeting in February, 1949, that the old archaic conceptions were still strong. A session then on "The Function of American Jewish History in Contemporary American Life" heard the traditional attack on American historians for not giving enough praise to the Jews. It heard a consideration of "communal and social aspects" which viewed the adjustment of Jews to the American scene entirely in terms of the "dismemberment" of the European kind of community, without any sense of what was constructive in the life of Jews in the United States. And it was told by a distinguished scholar, who still thinks of apologetics and local pride as worthy motivations for historical writing, that the most pressing problems of the Society were those of acquiring a building and collecting archives. Still, these are men of good will who command considerable talent. If they could shed the regressive traits that now narrow their view of the past, they would be in a position to make signal contributions to the understanding by the general American society of the Jews and by the Jews of themselves.

TODAY'S THE DAY

EARL HENDLER

TODAY'S the day when we have come
together, the lonely flute, the drum
greeting us, wooden, oracular.
But the theme starts and ends on the particular,
the lonely theme that's thinking aloud,
allergic to this general crowd
that closes in with scrape of chairs
to kill the music. No one cares.

Amid the applause
that marks the speaker's pause,
it beats its hands upon the walls.
Knowing all the original falls,
it points a bloody finger within
to probe an uneasy origin.

EARL HENDLER has published poetry in *Experiment, Compass, North American Review,* and other magazines. He was born in Newark, New Jersey, in 1917 and studied at Rutgers and Columbia University; he is now teaching in the Newark school system. Mr. Hendler's poem "Moby Dick" appeared in our January issue.

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LETTERS FROM READERS

Yiddish, But Is It Art?

To the Editor of Commentary:

I read Heinz Politzer's article "Starring Schwartz and Skulnik" (Commentary, January 1949), while still under the impact of my encounter with New York's Yiddish theater. Since 1938, when I left Europe, I had lost all contact with Jewish art. In South America, I read about Maurice Schwartz. Full of curiosity and expectation, I went to the Yiddish Art Theatre at the first opportunity, and saw *The Voice of Israel.*

I left the theater a very disappointed man. A few days later the editor of a leading Jewish periodical asked me to write an article for him. When I suggested a protest against this type of "Yiddish Art," the editor shook his head sadly. The policy of his publication was to ignore the New York Yiddish theater. Convinced that criticism is useless, the editors content themselves with "doing nothing to injure" the Yiddish theater. This attitude was not much more to my liking than that of other Jewish-American publications. One of these felt obliged to praise the play. Another, published by an organization to which the author belonged, even went so far as to speak of his talent.

Heinz Politzer's article is one more indication of the independent attitude that has given Commentary its well-earned place on the Jewish American scene. If I have anything to add to Politzer's article, it is only because of the difference in our temperament and approach. Politzer writes with measured calm, as befits a detached art critic; whereas a specifically Jewish standpoint seems to justify, or perhaps even to demand, more passion, despair, and bitterness.

Here a discussion of the acting and technical considerations is irrelevant. The crucial point is the repertory. Some events are so overpowering that they cannot be properly seen until a certain time has elapsed. When in the middle 30's someone asked Karl Kraus why he had not yet stated his position on Hitler, he replied: "I have no ideas about Hitler."—The epic of Israel's rebirth has not yet been written. With respect and veneration, a generation that is assuredly not poor in writers has abstained from writing prematurely of a great moment.

I do not protest that a Mr. Elias Gilner should feel a poetic impulse and not allow himself to be deterred by the fears that beset the angels. But if it is the democratic right of every citizen to write bad plays, the responsibility for performing them rests on the producers. If a few speeches of Ben Gurion and Shertok, and some of the many able articles on Israel's struggle for liberation that have appeared in the American press in the course of the past year had been presented in dialogue form, the result would surely have been better. It is simply beyond comprehension that in a year which to school children of coming generations will represent as obvious an historical date as 1492, a Jewish "art" theater can find no better expression of Jewish heroism and martyrdom than to stress the fact that the heroes of its drama have had nothing to eat for several hours, not so much as a "glesele tai." It is bad enough that Arabs, Poles, and Englishmen should seem unreal. But this Jewish theater actually succeeds in making its Palestinians seem un-Palestinian. The author shows not the slightest spark of feeling for character. And even if he did the all-pervading pathos would make it utterly impossible to portray a generation that is distinguished by a complete lack of pathos.

So much for the Yiddish Art Theatre. Yiddish it unquestionably is, and I suppose it is theater, but art it is certainly not. *What a Guy* is an American musical in Yiddish. It is no better and no worse than its prototypes. Skulnik is an excellent clown with nothing particularly Jewish about him. Two scenes are specifically Jewish. In one of them six million Jewish martyrs are sandwiched between vaudeville and review.

When I state my opinion on the New York Yiddish theater at the Café Royale, I am invariably told that the public is to blame, because it wants not art but *kitsch.* This explanation does not satisfy me. The audience at *The Voice of Israel* was not moved. There would have been no demonstrations against a better play.

Heinz Politzer is generous when he says that Schwartz' and Skulnik's "contribution to the totality of Jewish civilization in our time is wholly passive; it does not go beyond the contribution which the group they represent

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makes by its mere existence. They . . . keep alive a tradition. . . . One day the Jewish communities of the Western countries may feel called upon to use this tradition."

I believe that this view is too fatalistic. And I do not think we shall be injuring the Yiddish theater by ruthlessly disclosing its defects. If the public is to blame, it is to blame for its passive acceptance of everything that is offered to it. And this blame is shared by the press that feels obliged to close both eyes. If New York can have good Yiddish newspapers, why, at this turning point in Jewish history, should there be no talented Jewish dramatists? If *The Voice of Israel* and *What a Guy* are really all that is left of the tradition of the Yiddish theater, there is no reason why, in a moment of definitive Jewish renaissance, this Yiddish theater should not disappear.

BENNO WEISER

New York City

American Falashas?

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Congratulations upon the publication of Dr. Wolf Leslau's exciting account of his expedition into Ethiopia and his contact with the Falashas. His is a remarkable narrative; I find myself looking forward impatiently to the *Falasha Anthology* in which his account is to be presented in expanded form.

So great is the intrinsic interest of his material that it tends to overshadow the line of thought which the article evoked and stimulated. It is clear from Dr. Leslau's description that the religious beliefs and practices of the Falashas are closer to those of the ancient Israelites than are the beliefs and practices of the modern Jew, however orthodox he may claim to be. Not that Falasha Judaism is to be taken as a living fossil preserving intact the religion of Israel; it is, rather, the product of centuries of evolution and of adaptation to the surrounding environment. But the pace of change in Ethiopia must have been slow; the Falashas lived in relative isolation, facing living conditions not too much different from those of Biblical Palestine. The primitive elements of the purity codes stand out vividly in Dr. Leslau's account of the Falashas, and by means of his description we can read back more easily into the minds of the creators of the Israelitish religion of Bible times—and see in clearer perspective how far even the least progressive forms of contemporary Judaism have evolved from their primitive ancestry in the Temple cult.

Judaism is constantly changing, must change if it is to continue to live. To name the Judaism of any one time or place as "normative" or "orthodox" is to commit religious suicide. The alternative to modification, to modernization, is fossilization. It is for this reason that many of us viewed with horror the silly "excommunication" of Rabbi Mordecai Kaplan, a few years ago, for his presumption in modifying prayers that had been in need of modification for generations. It is for this reason that we are aghast at the immediate success of the desperate Orthodox attempt to kill Judaism by fossilizing its merely temporary and local East European form—even such transitory phases of that temporary form as the dress and hair-style of East European Jews. Not anti-Semitism, but the literalist self-styled orthodoxy of the Chevra and the Yeshiva, is the death-threat to Judaism. Falasha Judaism is the Judaism of an out-of-the-way corner of the world, by-passed by contemporaneity. Can we afford to create other such forsaken remnants in odd corners of our metropolis? Must we not, rather, attempt by all means in our power to avoid becoming American Falashas—fit subjects for research by an ethnographer of the year 3000?

JOSEPH L. BLAU

Department of Philosophy
Columbia University

From the Jewish Music Council

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In Dr. Kurt List's article in the February issue of your magazine, "A Year of Jewish Music," he makes certain statements about the music section of the National Jewish Welfare Board (I assume he means the National Jewish Music Council sponsored by the National Jewish Welfare Board) which are likely to convey erroneous impressions about the National Jewish Music Council. He states that our activities are of significance chiefly because of our assumption of the role of "official" spokesman of Jewish music. Nothing is further from the truth. If Dr. List will examine our publications, and read carefully our leaflet describing our objectives and program, he will learn that our intention is to stimulate, promote, and educate so as to advance the cause of Jewish music in this country, in order that "the community as a whole [may] develop a true concern for music." We have never been so presumptuous as to assume the role of "official spokesman" of Jewish music in America.

The National Jewish Music Council, representing over seventy national organizations and local music councils, promotes the Jewish Music Festival, encourages performances of Jewish music, old and new, and helps to foster community-wide participation in all-year-round programs of Jewish music. Programmatic materials

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and other aids are prepared for these purposes. Our objectives are promotional and educational, in no sense authoritarian, as "official spokesman" implies.

Dr. List further states, to prove his contention that "priority is given to their own publicity by organizations supposedly sponsoring creativity in Jewish music," that the "music section of the National Jewish Welfare Board recently rejected a prominent conductor's offer to have a prize-winning symphony of its contest performed at Hunter College on the grounds that the press does not go to these concerts."

Had Dr. List taken the trouble to ascertain all the facts in the situation, which we would have been happy to make available, he would have learned that the conductor referred to was offered the privilege of conducting the winning work in his home city, where there was no question of "press."

There were ensuing circumstances concerning the performance of the winning work at Hunter College, which necessitated some correspondence with the conductor. Dr. List excerpted one sentence from the several letters to prove his point. Evidence of this sort is hardly conclusive.

For the record, I wish to state that the conductor never replied to our letters and never reaffirmed his expressed interest in performing the work in his home city, a privilege which we gladly accorded him.

ETHEL S. COHEN
Chairman

Jewish Music Council
New York City

[Dr. List's reply to Mrs. Cohen's letter will appear next month.—ED.]

The Double Gift

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

As a couple of other cranks may have written you, the lines which Professor Bloom attributes, in his interesting article "Dictator of the Lodz Ghetto," to "the sensitive Hasidic poet S. Shayevich," are a straight lift from Bialik's "City of Slaughter." I refer to:

"The Lord has showered even us with gentle hand:
"A double gift—
"The death-decree and spring.
"The garden blooms and the sun shines.
"And the slaughterer slaughters. . . ."

In the Yiddish version of the "City of Slaughter" the lines read:

"Den Got hot dir mit milder hand geshenkt a tzviling,
"A sh'chitah mit a frihling.
"Der gorten hot gebliht, di zun geloichten—
"Un der shoichet hot geschochten."

MAURICE SAMUEL

New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Mr. Samuel is right, of course. The verse appears in an apostrophe to Bialik by Shayevich in his *Lech Lecho* (Lodz, 1946), without quotation marks. It did strike a peculiarly strong note in my ear, but I had read the "City of Slaughter" too long ago to identify it. Shayevich could not have intended to claim the lines as his own.

SOLOMON F. BLOOM

New York City

Segregation in Housing

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Charles Abrams' article "The Segregation Threat in Housing," in the February COMMENTARY, points up a problem that has serious possibilities. Even though I have worked on a specific problem of this kind in housing in Trenton, N. J., I had not quite thought of it on the scale brought out by Mr. Abrams.

I have written a member of the Housing Agency for his views on the question, and will arrange to talk it over with him more fully, in the hope that I can help correct the present segregation effects in public housing.

CHARLES R. HOWELL

House of Representatives
Washington, D. C.

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I am glad to add my comment to those of others on the article by Mr. Charles Abrams in your February issue. It appears to be an excellent statement of the situation and a clear exposition of the complications that have to be met in dealing with evasions and segregatory practices. We have an editorial comment on Mr. Abrams' article in the February 19 issue of *America*.

REV. JOHN LAFARGE, S.J.

America, National Catholic Weekly
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Charles Abrams' article, "The Segregation Threat in Housing," is, in our opinion, one of the finest of the many contributions he has made to the racial relations phase of housing. It is indeed challenging to the government and citizenry of our democracy. . . .

FRANK S. HORNE
Assistant to the Administrator

Housing and Home Finance Agency
Washington, D. C.

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BOOKS IN REVIEW

Toynbee's Perspective

CIVILIZATION ON TRIAL. By ARNOLD J. TOYNBEE. Oxford University Press. 263 pp. $3.50.

Reviewed by L. B. NAMIER

"By 'the age in which we are living' I mean the last five or six thousand years within which mankind, after having been human for at least six hundred thousand years before that, attained the modest level of social and moral achievement that we call 'civilization.'" This sentence supplies the key to Dr. Toynbee's historical thinking. That age, which on the cosmic time scale is "of such infinitesimal brevity" that it could hardly be shown "on any chart of the whole history of this planet," has seen nineteen distinct civilizations, of which five survive. "I mean by a civilization the smallest unit of historical study at which one arrives when one tries to understand the history of one's own country." Thus his work is a protest against what he calls "our own unconscionable parochial-mindedness," "the parish-pump politics of our Western society as recorded in the national and municipal archives of ephemeral 'Great Powers'"; and he himself tries to envisage the history of the last five or six thousand years as one whole, within which "the histories of all societies of the species called civilizations" are "in some sense parallel and contemporary." Indeed, "the philosophical contemporaneity of all civilizations" is a basic tenet of his historical outlook.

Dr. Toynbee studied, and next taught, *Literae Humaniores* at Oxford, a discipline based almost entirely on the Greek and Latin classics. "As a training-ground," he writes, "the history of the Graeco-Roman world has its conspicuous merits." It is visible in perspective and can be seen as a whole; its surviving materials are manageable in quantity and "well-balanced in their character,"—"statues, poems, and works of philosophy count here for more than the texts of laws and treaties"; and "its outlook is oecumenical rather than parochial"—Athens educated all Hellas, while Rome made the whole Greco-Roman world into a single commonwealth. Here then was his starting point: a thorough knowledge of a civilization, distant and "ancient" according to our usual norms, and dead, which none the less lives in us, and in that sense, too, is "contemporaneous." But Dr. Toynbee did not stop at that, or at the Byzantine world. To certain reminiscences which he quotes in his book from the time, forty years ago, when we both were undergraduates at Balliol College, I shall add two: I think of a night when we sat on the floor in his room, poring over a large map, he tracing the journeys of Marco Polo, and I the *Itinerary* of Benjamin of Tudela; and we were comparing the two—his reading already extended to Central Asia and Old Cathay. And next I remember how he staggered me when, towards the end of our time in college, he told me that he had worked an average of ten hours a day: no mean feat while all that Oxford offers and claims invades the undergraduate's time table. It is the range of his interests combined with a supreme capacity for sustained work which have enabled him effectively to extend his vision and knowledge beyond what even the most widely read historians have attempted.

THE First World War made Dr. Toynbee study the problems of Europe as a unit, and in the Political Intelligence Department of the Foreign Office, in which we two again worked together, his thorough acquaintance with Greece, a by-product of his classical studies, caused his being put in charge of Near Eastern affairs, which then meant fighting the "unspeakable Turk." But soon after the war, Dr. Toynbee changed from a pro-Greek into a pro-Turk and, fascinated by Islam, became an eager student of its history and culture: a third "civilization" swam into his ken, and carried him far into those regions of Central Asia which already at an earlier stage had excited his imagination. He

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tried to jump clear of his "native Western standing-ground," that remote corner "at the extreme western tip of one of the many peninsulas of the Continent of Asia," and survey the world from its center, the old meetingplace "of the religions and philosophies of India, China, Iran, Syria, and Greece." "Our first task is to perceive . . . all the known civilizations, surviving or extinct, as a unity," as so many "essays in a single great common human enterprise," which is "to transcend the level of primitive human life."

Dr. Toynbee was born and bred in Victorian England, at "the noon of a halycon day" which was "fatuously expected to endure to eternity." But to him the mood of Kipling's *Recessional* appealed more than that of Kipling's self-confident imperialism: Dr. Toynbee did not expect (perhaps hardly wished) the British Empire to endure, nor the supremacy of Europe, nor the ascendancy of the West—possibly not even man's rule on the globe. There is a marked strand of pessimism in him, even of defeatism; and he was to witness historical developments which seem to justify every one of his doubts: if now he tries to re-assure himself and others, at least concerning the future of the human race as such, his attempts seem rather strained, are emotionally less accentuated than his forebodings of doom, and on the whole fail to carry conviction. His "morphology of the species of society called civilizations" concerns itself with the "recurring pattern in the process of their breakdowns, declines, and falls" much rather than with their rise—for which there is, however, also a valid objective reason: "breakdown means loss of control" and a consequent lapse into automatism, and "automatic processes are apt to be uniform and regular"— therefore more amenable to systematization. And here is his diagnosis: the cause of death of civilizations has invariably been "either war or class or some combination of the two"; and "the regular pattern of social disintegration is a schism of the disintegrating society into a recalcitrant proletariat and a less and less efficient dominant minority." The outstanding achievement of Western civilization is to have unified mankind which previously inhabited many mansions but now is gathered under one roof: "it looks almost as though a radical Westernization of the entire world was now inevitable." In that unification technology is "the most obvious ingredient"—but "man cannot live by technology alone."

"Our Western 'know-how' has unified the whole world . . . and it has inflamed the institutions of War and Class, which are the two congenital diseases of civilization, into utterly fatal maladies." In the past their ravages "have not yet ever been all-embracing." The lower strata of society usually survived, and when one society collapsed, it did not necessarily drag down others with it. But now class has "become capable of irrevocably disintegrating society, and war of annihilating the entire human race." Their victory over man "would be conclusive and definite." Man who "is relatively good at dealing with non-human nature," is bad at dealing "with human nature in himself and in his fellow human beings": "a dazzling success in the field of intellect . . . and a dismal failure in the things of the spirit." Yet the question whether our civilization is doomed, Dr. Toynbee answers emphatically in the negative. "What shall we do to be saved? In politics, establish a constitutional cooperative system of world government. In economics, find working compromises . . . between free enterprise and socialism. In the life of the spirit, put the secular super-structure back onto religious foundations."

"War or class or some combination of the two." War is an armed conflict between nations or states, or between parties within them, while class is an order of stratification of society: two disparate concepts co-ordinated as causes. But class is only one among the elements generating strife, rather over-emphasized as such in our time; and Dr. Toynbee's formula, reduced to a single denominator, predicates no more than that conflicts between human aggregates have invariably been the cause of the downfall of civilizations; and naturally the more powerful the material and technical means evolved, the more devastating become such conflicts.

Ultimately the problem is psychological: why does that social animal, man, who progresses by working in groups, periodically wipe out his achievements in inter-group conflicts? Psychologists explain that communal life is based on a suppression of hostile impulses within the group, and that these seek release outside it. But if such conflicts are mere occasions for the unloading of destructive human passions—and history seems to bear out this view—rational advice such as above is beside the point. As Dr. Toynbee says, man is bad at dealing with his own nature, and "there is no warrant for supposing that, within 'historical times,' there has been any

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progress in the evolution of human nature itself, either physical or spiritual." And to fill what might be described as "a hollow place" within Dr. Toynbee's own system, he seems to turn, more and more, toward religion.

In the diffusion of civilizations, "spiritual waves of radiation . . . weaken as they travel outwards," but gain new life when they collide and coalesce with other such waves. "The coalescence of a Greek wave with an Indian wave has generated the Buddhist civilization of the Far East. . . . The same Greek wave has also coalesced with a Syrian wave, and it is this union that has generated the Christian civilization of our Western world" ("Syrian" is significant). In another passage he speaks of religion as the weak spot in the Greek's armor "at which the Oriental counter-stroke went home and made history." Here religion appears as a historically determined phenomenon.

But Dr. Toynbee's attitude towards religion has changed, or is changing, as can be seen in one of the latest essays in this volume: on "Christianity and Civilization," and the various views about their relation. "One of the oldest and most persistent views is that Christianity was the destroyer of the civilization within whose framework it grew up"—this he rejects, as the decay of the Greco-Roman civilization had set in at a much earlier stage: "The rise of the philosophies, and *a fortiori* that of religions, was not a cause; it was a consequence." According to a second view, "Christianity is, as it were, the egg, grub, and chrysalis between butterfly and butterfly. Christianity is a transitional thing which bridges the gap between one civilization and another, and I confess that I myself held this rather patronizing view for many years." A similar part can be ascribed to Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism within their own spheres.

A third possible view is "the exact reverse of the second": that so far from religion being a "subsidiary to the reproduction of secular civilizations . . . the successive rises and falls of civilizations may be subsidiary to the growth of religion." Then, "if our secular Western civilization perishes, Christianity may be expected not only to endure but to grow in wisdom and stature as the result of a fresh experience of secular catastrophe." And in another essay Dr. Toynbee enjoins on us "to relegate economic and political history to a subordinate place and give religious history the primacy." But then he must decide from the very outset whether religion should be treated as revealed truth or as a historically conditioned phenomenon; and if he writes as a believing Christian, he will have to revise a good deal in his own system (he will hardly be able to write again, as on page 24: ". . . about AD 1500, to reckon in terms of our Western parochial era. . . .").

If truth is the core of religion, origins matter more than subsequent developments; the questions of "evolution" and "growth" hardly arise for it; and Sinai and Calvary assume a transcendent character. Then the history of the Jewish people, so closely bound up with these two events, acquires peculiar significance; so does perhaps what that fervent Catholic, Léon Bloy, calls "the Jewish Mystery," and refuses to call "the Jewish Question"; and so does the Return. Hitherto Dr. Toynbee, when surveying world history through a telescope, has never yet perceived the Jewish people: it simply does not enter into his purview.

So FAR his attitude towards Zionism has been negative, not to say hostile, and his influence, especially through Chatham House, has contributed to the anti-Zionist turn in British policy; though, to my knowledge, no anti-Jewish feeling ever entered into his attitude. What did count for a great deal was his pro-Islamism, which is marked even in this collection of essays, and which sometimes results in surprising statements. Thus, according to him, as late as the 16th century "Islam inspired hysteria in Western hearts" because "it wielded a sword of the spirit against which there was no defence in material armaments," and Westerners were in danger of "turning Turk." Is he not projecting onto others a phase in his own development? For who were these potential converts to Islam? He can hardly generalize from the exceptional case of the Bosnian Bogumils, who were not even sincere converts. On page 76, he makes a Moslem claim that Islam has retrieved "the revelation of the One True God" from "polytheism and idolatry." But when on page 87 he writes that "Islam's creative gift to mankind is monotheism, and we surely dare not throw this gift away," it is by no means clear that he is merely reproducing a Moslem claim. And on page 88 he declares that Islam has "a mighty spiritual mission still to carry out." But in the essay on "Islam, the West, and the Future," he admits that "nationalism, and not Pan-Islamism is the formation into which the Islamic peoples are falling; and for the majority of Muslims an inevitable, though undesired,

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outcome of nationalism will be submergence in the cosmopolitan proletariat of the Western world."

None the less, he still discerns a mission for Islam. "Two conspicuous sources of danger... in the present relations of this cosmopolitan proletariat with the dominant element in our modern Western society are race consciousness and alcohol; and in the struggle with each of these evils the Islamic spirit has a service to render which might prove, if it were accepted, to be of high moral and social value." The pro-Moslems in Britain are legion; but few there are who will join Dr. Toynbee in setting up their Moslem hero as a sort of "dry" John Brown.

WHATEVER the weaknesses of Dr. Toynbee's work, due to excessive generalizations which the very nature of his attempt imposes on him, or to his idiosyncracies, his ability to survey continents and ages in one great sweep is impressive, and so is the freshness and creative quality of his imagination. Among the thirteen essays which compose this volume, the one that best illustrates his style of thought is perhaps "The Unification of the World and the Change in Historical Perspective": on the way in which the Western voyages of discovery transformed "man's human environment" and the historical outlook, at least of the non-Western peoples.

About AD 1500 there was a "belt of civilizations girdling the Old World from the Japanese Isles on the Northeast to the British Isles on the Northwest: Japan, China, Indo-China, Indonesia, India, Dar-al-Islam, the Orthodox Christendom of Rum, and another Christendom in the West." They were in touch with each other, but not so close as to feel members of the same society. The main line of communication was provided by a chain of steppes and deserts that cut across that belt from the Sahara to Mongolia. "The Steppe was an inland sea . . . of higher conductivity for human intercourse than the saltwater sea ever had been before the close of the 15th century of the Christian era. This waterless sea had its dry-shod ships and its quayless ports. The steppe-galleons were camels, the steppe-galleys horses, and the steppe-ports 'caravan cities'— . . . Petra and Palmyra, Damascus and Ur, Tamerlane's Samarkand, and the Chinese emporia at the gates of the Great Wall."

In seeking a vantage-ground for his survey, Dr. Toynbee asked himself "who was the most centrally placed and most intelligent observer . . . among notable non-Westerners" then alive, and found his man in the Emperor Babur, the author of a brilliant autobiography written in Turkish. Babur was a descendant of Tamerlane, the Transoxanian conqueror who made the last attempt to unify the world by land operations; and Babur himself in 1519 invaded India.

At that time Babur's capital, Farghana, was "the central point, and the Turks were . . . the central family of nations"; and there was some justification for "a Turco-centric history" seeing that from the 4th century of the Christian era, when the Turks "pushed the last of their Indo-European-speaking predecessors off the steppe," down to the 17th century, which witnessed the collapse of Turkish power in Europe, Iran, and India, "the Turkish-speaking peoples really were the keystone of the Asiatic arch from which the pre-da Gaman belt of civilizations was suspended"; and their conquests extended from Manchuria to Algeria, and from the Ukraine to Deccan.

Yet, Dr. Toynbee points out, the Emperor Babur in his memoirs never once mentions Western Christendom, though he must have been aware of the existence of the "Franks"; nor even Vasco da Gama's landing in India, twenty-one years before his own invasion of that sub-continent. It may have escaped his attention, or else he may have felt that "the wanderings of these water-gipsies were unworthy of a historian's notice." He did not realize that "these ocean-faring Franks had turned the flank of Islam and taken her in the rear." And with "the substitution of the Ocean for the Steppe as the principal medium of world-communication . . . the centre of the world made a sudden jump . . . from the steppe ports of Central Asia to the ocean ports of the Atlantic." After hovering round Seville and Lisbon, it settled for a time in London: to remove in our own lifetime to New York.

THUS about 1500, the social structure of the half dozen civilizations was remarkably uniform: primitive peasantries ruled by a minority enjoying a monopoly of power, leisure, and skill. And there was a similar uniformity in their historical outlook: each had its own version of the "Chosen People" myth. China was "All that is under Heaven"; Japan, "the land of the Gods"; to the Brahmans all outside the Aryan Holy Land were untouchables; Moscow was

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"the Third Rome"; and the "Franks" were "solemnly asserting AD 1500" that they, and not Orthodox Eastern Christendom, were the true heirs of Israel, Greece, and Rome.

And while the others, shaken by the impact of Western civilization, have since given up their pretensions, "the Franks are still singing the same old song: singing it solo now. . . ." Their technology has unified the world; but they themselves still require an "educative toss." And it is by no means certain where the world centre of gravity will be in an age when neither the steppe, nor the ocean, but the air will be the medium of human intercourse.

Unease in Zion

ROADS TO ZION: FOUR CENTURIES OF TRAVELERS' REPORTS. Translated by I. M. LASK and edited by KURT WILHELM. Schocken Books. 117 pp. $1.50. (Schocken Library Number 14.)

IN THE HEART OF THE SEAS. By S. Y. AGNON. Translated by I. M. LASK, with drawings by T. HERZL ROME. Schocken Books. 128 pp. $1.50. (Schocken Library Number 9.)

UNDER THE FIG TREE: PALESTINIAN STORIES. By YITZHAK SHENBERG. Translated by I. M. LASK. Schocken Books. 122 pp. $1.50. (Schocken Library Number 13.)

Reviewed by ISAAC ROSENFELD

OF SEVERAL Jewish attitudes toward Palestine to be found in these three books, the only surprising one is disappointment. In *Roads to Zion,* the prevailingly realistic tone of the writing conceals the disappointment through protective coloration, enclosing it in an atmosphere of hardship—the journey and life in Palestine are difficult and full of danger. *In the Heart of the Seas,* a short novel concerned mostly with the journey, accomplishes the same concealment through fantasy. In *Under the Fig Tree,* a book of short stories, and the most modern of the three in the time of its action, the disappointment is clearly admitted.

Roads to Zion is a compilation of excerpts from letters written in Palestine or *en route,* from the 15th to the 19th century. The treatment in each case is brief, the writer (or the editor) confining himself to essential details of the ruin of the land, the lack of employment, poor housing, etc. But the tone is: this is what we must expect; let's not deceive ourselves that life will be easy in Zion. The writers of these letters have undergone great trouble to arrive in Palestine, and they are aware of the merit that the journey and residence there have bestowed on them; but it takes a while—several years in fact—to get used to it, by which time one may die (of hunger, disease, or old age). All this is suggested only by the most delicate resignation, covered up by praise of the Lord. Nevertheless the disappointment is there.

IN each case, the motive for the journey was a devotional one and the traveler regarded residence in the Holy Land as a blessed state of being; but the description of the life that is led there in no way presents this state of being as something actually experienced. One does worship with greater fervor; but little else is noted. The blessing remains an object of belief —where again we may infer that it has not been achieved, for what we experience we need no longer believe in—it is there. In this sense, to go on believing is to go on waiting. Now to believe in the Redemption, to wait for it, is a blessing; and if it is a greater blessing to wait for the Messiah inside Palestine than out, the difference should be demonstrable. Nevertheless, presence in the Land, on its actual soil (a little bag of which had, in the Diaspora, been treasured so that one's grave might not be wholly in Exile), made less than the expected difference to our travelers. Their cursory references to religious ecstasy were probably impelled by a kind of etiquette—this is what their correspondents expect of them—and even the blessings that they list, such as that one has nothing to do all day but study Torah, quickly take on an appearance to the contrary. The secular life continues with a vengeance. Jews have a hard time of it wherever they be—*men plagt zich*—and even in the Presence one is plagued by *parnosse.*

LEIBUSH the Butcher is the only one of the characters in S. Y. Agnon's short novel who confesses his disappointment. "Have you ever seen a country where you can find nothing but mutton?" This is meant to be vulgar, but it

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seems to me wise. Jewish wisdom is impossible without materialism, and I prefer the tone of this remark, with its salt and ease, to the straining after pure spirit which goes on in most of the novel. This sort of thing: Hananiah, who misses the boat which the rest of his companions board for Palestine, spreads out his handkerchief on the high seas and floats into port ahead of the party. He is a magical character, although a simple, ordinary man of much less learning than the rabbis and small-town notables who make the journey by ship. His powers, and he can do everything, are the reward of his piety and charitableness. This gives the fundamental equation of the novel for the transformation of virtue into reward. Naturally, in such an atmosphere, where fantasy stands guard against disappointment, experience counts less than belief, and the promise is automatically shifted so much nearer the fulfilment. (Even so, there are hardships, misfortunes, deaths.) But this may be no mere trick of the novelist but an insight, after all, into the character of religious men, whose hope, because it is spread through with fantasy, can never be entirely wrecked.

Yitzhak Shenberg's *Under the Fig Tree* is full of two kinds of disappointment: with the self and with the Land. Self-disappointment is basic; it is the source of much of the feeling toward Palestine, and probably the reason, through guilt, that he does not criticize the country directly. His characters keep their own shortcomings always in mind, and Shenberg seems to be particularly careful to avoid rationalizing their dissatisfactions. But the disappointment does extend outward, reaching community, the social relations, the life of the country. One factor in the spreading outward of personal discontent is the loss of religious conviction which, for older generations, absorbed some of the impact of the world and kept the self under a spell; now the aura of sacredness about each grain of sand in Zion is gone, and with it the consecration of prophecy, law, and holy study. Palestine becomes a country like any other country—a place that the present occupies and which contains only so much of history as connects the events of separate lives. Yet an absence is felt: Palestine should mean more.

Shenberg builds up a mood of desolation in unfulfilled promises, the heartbreak of which comes from a kind of forfeit, the abandonment of the special sense of Eretz Israel. The secular reality exists by default of the religious consciousness. And while Shenberg is modern, which is to say, his conscience is not uneasy because he has dropped religion, ease in a secular world is something he might feel only in other countries. In Palestine he becomes perversely Jewish: uneasy. The complaint is reduced in scope to loneliness, frustrations in love and communal work—it passes almost for a malaise in social psychology. But there is an eschatological hankering in the hearts of Shenberg's forlorn heroes—this is, after all, the Land of the Redemption. Into his descriptions of this land he introduces high heels, mattresses, tomatoes, trucks, warehouses, and other such items from the internationalization of commodities in modern life. All of which makes Palestine but another *place,* and as such, a place where the old Hope suffers a new disappointment.

As MIGHT be expected from their difference in mood, Shenberg's style is more commonplace than Agnon's. The latter is a self-conscious writer, keeping a balance between dependence on and detachment from traditional forms of devotional literature. He works Torah, Talmud, and the rhythms of the Psalms into his language and occasionally draws on Yiddish speech patterns and inflections. The result I can't imagine is of much significance in modern Hebrew (this is conjecture)—it lies too much within the manner of the great Yiddish writers of the 19th century. Their style grew preeminently out of irony and incongruity, the pairing of Hebrew and Yiddish, sacred and secular, the living ancient tradition and the struggle to keep it alive—but from all this, I should think, modern Hebrew is drawing away. Shenberg's style, even though it is narrower, poorer, and, to judge—perhaps unfairly—from the translation, clumsy and immature at times, must be closer to the main development in modern Hebrew prose: the problem of renewing the language, of making words with the right connotations to express the social, industrial, and political conditions of life today. Though Shenberg makes much less use of traditional Hebrew sources—Biblical suggestions are kept to a minimum in his stories—he is more Hebrew (certainly much less Yiddish) in spirit than Agnon. Just as Palestine becomes a place, so Hebrew becomes a language like

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any other; the special sense of Land and Language was derived from Yiddish and the Exile. But the disappointment expressed in Shenberg's stories suggests that the tension between Promised Land and Exile has not yet quite disappeared in Israel. It is still on the way out —just as Shenberg's own mood, to judge by the kind of nationalism current in Israel, must also be on the way out.

Seeing Not Believing

EIMI. By E. E. CUMMINGS. William Sloane Associates. 432 pp. $5.00.

Reviewed by RAYMOND ROSENTHAL

THE reissure of *Eimi* raises an interesting question: why was E. E. Cummings not taken in by the Soviet myth? For it is clear from this long-winded, wonderfully witty, vastly meticulous day-by-day record of his Russian trip that he was never for a minute taken in, though he did his traveling in Russia in 1931, just one year before Soviet partisanship among American avant-garde intellectuals reached its peak. Why, then, did it fall to so politically untutored and economically naïve a person as a mere poet—a poet synonymous with the 20's, that era of sentimental softheadedness and poverty of theory—to pierce the idealistic smokescreens and go straight to the reality?

But is it not precisely what many of his critics would contend was Cummings' disability —his exclusive concern with the esthetic—that accounts for his superior accuracy as an observer? It is the intensely held belief that every object, no matter how unprepossessing and insignificant, is a possible source of the living, the beautiful, which leads Cummings to trust only his own perceptions and to ignore the surrounding buzz of ideology. Every *thing* is endowed with transcendent interest, for behind each object lies an ever-present possibility—out of even this dead surface the surprisingly alive may make its unannounced appearance. True, the esthetic commitment has its own wearying ideology—and there are many pages of dull matter in this book to attest to this—; yet, unlike the social theories of his contemporaries, the virtue of Cummings' view is that it always, despite its divagations, brings him back face to face with the actual.

And what insignificant significant things this poet manages to see! His first day in Moscow he notices not only the tension in every particle of the air—"everywhere a mysterious sense of behaving, of housebrokenness, of watch-your-stepism"—but also the marked dowdiness of the women, the passive, lumpy unresponsiveness of the crowds on the trams, and the epidemic of wounded fingers which seems to have afflicted the male factory workers. Proliferating out from each of these details one might trace a whole society's structure; indeed, now, after years of intensive critical scholarship, every newspaper reader knows what those unresponsive crowds, those bandaged fingers signify.

Indeed, Cummings was, from a certain standpoint, the perfect person to send to a country which, according to its propagandists, was in the process of building a new society. For the poet who had written *The Enormous Room* and brilliant satirical lyrics was undoubtedly an expert on the more decayed and decrepit forms of life, and, contrariwise, on life desperately thrusting itself free from the fetters of the mechanical. Only this poet could have seen in a street sprinkler the epitome of the Soviet spirit and say, after watching a square-full of Moscow's citizens get thoroughly and unprotestingly sprayed by it, that "the far-famed revolution . . . resembles a running amok street sprinkler, a normally benevolent mechanism which attains—thanks (possibly) to some defect in its construction or (possibly) to the ignorance or (probably) playfulness of its operator—distinct if spurious loss of unimportance." Or remark about Lenin's Tomb that it was "perhaps the architectural equivalent for 'Boo!—I scared you that time.'" Or describe a Stalinist fellow-traveler with so keen an intuition of his conventionality, fear, and prudery masking under the cover of idealism.

Yet he is always on the lookout for the unexpected that betokens the living: in the Soviet bank (that "strictly ubiquitous whenwhere of casual filth and aimless commotion and profound hoping inefficiency") it appears as a filthy baby creeping across the floor; at the dreary propaganda play it is the conspiring wink of one of the actors just before the curtain falls on the frenzied patriotic appeal; and in an Odessa of helpless waiting around and lost papers it is a fellow "Noo Inglundur" who speaks the earthiest of mother tongues. Always, just when the inorganic and the dead seems dominant, life intrudes and scrawls its irreverent, spontaneous comment.

In *Eimi* Cummings has raised spontaneity to

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a principle; he is willing to sacrifice everything, even clarity and succinctness, to this one aim. His style has the spirited tone of a man of wit talking uninhibitedly to himself. His involved notation, which takes its cues solely from the given, the scene before him, and then binds and weaves them together like musical themes, seems to me the inspired way of carrying out such a literary program. Borrowing from the montage of the movies and the visual intricacies of cubism, Cummings has created the appropriate medium for expressing the disjointed, often elusive and discontinuous sensations of the traveler caught against the fragmented background of a strange country. However, though his book is a worthy embodiment of the esthetic of novelty and surprise, I believe that Cummings was oversanguine when he expected to continue to surprise his reader for more than four hundred packed pages. But despite this rather important defect, *Eimi* stands as one of the few authentic enlargements of the boundaries of prose writing in modern literature.

The Mysterious Alien

AMONG THE NATIONS. Edited by LUDWIG LEWISOHN. Farrar, Straus. 288 pp. $3.00.

Reviewed by IRVING A. SANES

LUDWIG LEWISOHN, in his introduction to *Among the Nations*, describes the continuous struggle of the Jew to maintain the essence of Judaism as the "central moral fact of Western history." And around this act of integrity the Gentile writer, from Chaucer to Thomas Wolfe, has wilfully perpetuated an "evil and baseless myth." As an antidote, Mr. Lewisohn has collected three short stories and a play, by Gentile writers, which, purportedly, treat the Jew as a person—neither good nor bad, but, somehow, unique and universal in his Jewishness.

Unfortunately, except for the excerpt from Thomas Mann's *Joseph the Provider*, the stories are written by men incapable of recording the complexity of modern life, and therefore forced to handle the Jew either as a stereotype or an empty variable to be subordinated to an exposition of Gentile morals and manners.

The value of the book as a whole lies in a different area from that of the conscious intentions of the authors—in the revelation of the fears and anxieties aroused by the Jew among those artists who, like Jews striving to win places for themselves in a society of which they form a minority group, recognize, however unconsciously, the pre-eminence of art, sex, and wealth as the instruments that lead to the mastery of life.

BOTH Somerset Maugham (in "The Alien Corn") and Jacques de Lacretelle (in "Silbermann") treat the Jew as "artist." There is a disposition on their part to explain the intensity of the Jewish artistic drive by the rootlessness and alienation of the Jew (an explanation also offered by Jewish writers, with the difference that they assert alienation as a positive value), by the need of the Jew to integrate himself in society by *control* of one of the forms of art. In the Maugham story the Jew discovers his Jewishness and his artistic ambition at the same time; in the Lacretelle piece, the Jew dreams of taking his place as a French thinker even while he insists upon his racial uniqueness. In both cases the Jews are made to fail in their quest for greatness and recognition. A further theme links these two stories with the Galsworthy play (*Loyalties*): the theme of the Jew as "masochist." In the Maugham tale we find the Jew who tells dialect jokes to his titled English friends; in the Galsworthy play a drawing-room Shylock, trying to make his way in English society, can only put his Jewish foot forward; and Silbermann, the hero of Lacretelle's story, manages to get beaten up regularly by his Gentile schoolmates. All of them act like Dostoyevskian characters who crave to be and feel insulted, knowing that, at the same time, they will arouse pity and guilt in their tormentors.

THESE stories belong to the large body of fiction in which the Jew is viewed, in dread fascination, as the mysterious alien who threatens to corrupt art and sex by racial interpenetration, by assault on a culture to which he is not indigenous. The Jew who emerges from this art is not a Jew at all but a symbol of the artist's own fears of creative debilitation and sexual impotence—fears he has for himself and which he projects into the Jew in order to be able to deal with them more comfortably. In that sense there is a Jew within each artist, and the treatment he gives to the Jew has autobiographical relevance. In Sherwood Anderson's novel *Dark*

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Laughter, for example, where creative energy and orgastic potency are recognized as the inseparable touchstones of life, we encounter two Jews who embody the opposite: one is a facile word-slinger, the dangerous pretender at art, who is afraid of his wife; the other is a rejected suitor, a collector of delicate prints. Although their part in the novel is small, their significance is great: they represent the superficiality and impotence that Anderson himself feared as the root of failure (his own perhaps) in art and life.

In Hemingway's *The Sun Also Rises*, Robert Cohn is another such Jew. Outwardly he cannot be distinguished from his Gentile neighbors: he is a graduate of Princeton, an expert boxer, he plays tennis and takes walking tours; he even falls in love with Lady Brett. But we soon discover that he has merely adopted these Western attitudes: he really hates boxing, the novels he writes are bad, and he cannot ever win Lady Brett because he is a sexually dependent beggar who, like a bad conscience, continues to intrude when it is clear to everyone that he is not wanted. But in the end he is the truest expression of the particular fears that dominate the Hemingway type: he is the exhausted writer who will not be borne from Kilimanjaro on rhapsodic wings; he is the dependent husband who will not recover his dignity on an African safari; he is Jake, too, but without the consolation of a glorious war to explain his impotence.

Although this portrait of the Jew is independent of the Jew himself, it must, nevertheless, have an effect upon him. And, to one degree or another, Jewish life begins to imitate the literature that has grown up around it. Witnessing the Gentile's guilt and anxiety, the Jew approaches the creation of art, the amassing of wealth, the assimilation into the life of his nation, with guilt and anxiety himself. Even though he adopts the attitudes of alienation, he cannot surrender his real ambition to become an integral part of the society in which he is forced to live; the more firmly he is rejected, the more aggressive become his efforts until, in some cases, his preoccupation with art and wealth becomes so obsessive that he coincides, in many Gentile minds, with the image of the Jew as mysterious alien that they themselves have created.

This portrait of the Jew, whether drawn by Jew or Gentile, is so deeply imbedded in the irrational that the best we can expect is to discover in it an illumination of the unconscious fear and anxiety, guilt and shame that society breeds in its artists. A sociological survey would, among other things, prove that neither Jew nor Gentile is capable of reacting normally to the question of Jewishness; the sociologists themselves would have to come from a greater distance than did Myrdal to learn about the American Negro; and when they departed the Jew would still be found, in literature, to be one among the artist's self-portraits, an unacknowledged picture of Dorian Gray.

Psychoanalysis and Morals

MAN FOR HIMSELF. By ERICH FROMM. Rinehart. 254 pp. $3.00.

Reviewed by LILLIAN BLUMBERG

IT USED to be said that if society were good the individual would be happy. In these days of moral and emotional confusion this proposition has been reversed. A faith has arisen that the psychiatric processes by which individuals are freed from neurosis will, in some mystical way, also result in stabilizing the social order: if the individual is happy the social order will be good. Based on an unshakable faith in reason equal to that of the Marxists, this point of view has been expressed in various ways by many psychoanalytic writers. In *Man For Himself*, Dr. Erich Fromm restates it.

He attempts to demonstrate that, though the tradition of cultural relativism regards systems of morals and ethics as arbitrary and matters of changing opinion, ethical values are as objectively true "as other judgements derived from reason"; and that once correct ethical values are found they will make possible personal solutions that will inevitably produce justice and a good life for all men.

Unlike much of contemporary psychiatric writing, which reveals, in spite of itself, an underlying contempt for man, Dr. Fromm's argument rides on a passionate conviction of man's inherent goodness. But, unfortunately, this passion leads him into a primitive logical error—the failure to distinguish between what is already proven and what is still to be proven. The inherent goodness of man has most distinctly not been proven.

Dr. Fromm regards ethics as ultimately an applied science founded upon certain theoretical assertions about man. Like every applied science, it is based, he states, on the assumption

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that the end, the purpose of an act of choice, is desirable—as medicine is based on the premise that to cure disease and prolong life is desirable. But how can ethics be an applied science if it attempts to establish its own values and aims as well as the means of obtaining them?

Dr. Fromm's attempt to bring ethics within the framework of psychoanalysis is not convincing primarily because he fails to face the problems he himself raises. After all, the amoral role assumed by the analyst in the therapeutic situation—a role that evades the question of whether the patient's behavior is morally correct or not—is not arbitrary but involves many considerations which are held important to the process of cure. Dr. Fromm, who asserts that psychoanalysis "made the mistake of divorcing psychology from problems of philosophy and ethics," tells us neither at what points or specifically how the reconciliation with philosophy and ethics is to be effected nor what the consequences to psychoanalytic theory would be if it were effected.

In discussing one of the traditional problems of ethics, Dr. Fromm defines happiness, which is assumed to be the final end of any "humanistic" ethics, as the "concomitant of productive living." "Productive" remains undefined: man should be a productively oriented character; being productively oriented means that one is able "to use his powers and to realize potentialities inherent in his nature." But Dr. Fromm never states clearly just which powers are to be unfolded and just what man's responsibilities are toward his own existence. "While it is true," he states, "that man's productiveness can create material things, works of art, and systems of thought, by far the most important object of his own productiveness is man himself."

But even granting that we understand what Dr. Fromm means by "productively oriented"—a term he uses like a magic incantation—the underlying, though not specifically stated, assumption of his book, that a world of productively oriented men will result in a good social order, is not satisfactorily demonstrated. It does not follow that two productively oriented men will be in agreement—say—on whether or not Negroes should be admitted to Stuyvesant Town, or on what constitutes an equitable economic system.

IT WOULD be difficult to gather from Dr. Fromm that psychoanalysis is concerned with, in Ernst Kris' words, human behavior viewed as conflict. This makes it possible for Dr. Fromm to talk about *Man* rather than men, and leads him to beg one of the traditional questions raised by ethics—justice, which is always fraught with conflicts, inner and outer. When Dr. Fromm discusses the problem of how to judge a murderer he is torn between psychoanalysis and the law. "We can understand *how* and *why* he became what he is but we can also judge him as to *what* he is." Then he retreats to an analogy of much lower emotional intensity—the verdict delivered on a bad pair of shoes by a shoemaker. What Dr. Fromm really demonstrates is that as a psychoanalyst he can't be a judge, and as a judge he doesn't know how much of a psychoanalyst he has a right to be. And this was precisely the problem he meant to solve.

Dr. Fromm neither accomplishes the union of psychoanalysis and ethics nor establishes even the foundation of a system of ethics. He has merely affirmed that a system of ethics which permits man to lead a full and happy life would be desirable. In this he has not affirmed more than the writers on ethics who have gone before, without giving us much of a clue, from either psychoanalysis or philosophy, as to how this full and happy life is to be sought or achieved by contemporary man.

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Flowering Legend

THE LEGACY OF SACCO AND VANZETTI. By G. Louis Joughin and Edmund M. Morgan. Harcourt, Brace. 514 pp. $6.00.

Reviewed by James Rorty

A generation has passed since the state of Massachusetts put to death two Italian immigrants, not because they were criminals, which was never proved and which few people now believe, but because they were anarchists. Fate ordained that they should focus upon themselves the anger and hatred of a conservative community, normally decent, that for the moment was frightened out of its wits by the post-World War I witch-hunt of A. Mitchell Palmer. A generation has been almost long enough to blur the slate of memory, especially among the young people.

It is for these young people, primarily, that an able and sensitive scholar and a distinguished lawyer have written this fine book, the definitive volume to date. It will enable the generation born during the 20's to experience imaginatively the ordeal that their elders lived through on the clear summer night of August 23, 1927. The next morning we found that a good deal had been changed. The words law, justice, truth, honor, had lost their meaning for minds chilled by the cold wind of force, baffled by the spiritual paralysis of a whole community.

Yet something had been gained, too. The mean rancor of the unworthy judge, the blind and vulgar snobbism of the President of Harvard University were redeemed by the "splendid gentility" (the phrase is their lawyer's, a Harvard man) of the fish peddler and the self-forgetting devotion of the shoemaker who spent his last hours trying desperately, in a letter, to heal in advance the psychic wound he knew his son must suffer. They were redeemed by the extemporaneous statement of Vanzetti to the judge:

"This is what I say: I would not wish to a dog or to a snake, to the most low or misfortunate creature of the earth—I would not wish to any of them what I have had to suffer for things that I am not guilty of. But my conviction is that I have suffered for things that I am guilty of. I am suffering because I am a radical and indeed I am a radical; I have suffered be-

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cause I was an Italian, and indeed I am an Italian; I have suffered more for my family and for my beloved than for myself; but I am so convinced to be right that if you could execute me two times, and I could be reborn two other times, I would live again to do what I have done already. . . ."

FRAMEUPS are morally and socially costly. As the American economy floundered under the impact of the Great Depression, it became apparent that American intellectuals in significant numbers had withdrawn their allegiance from the society that had framed Sacco and Vanzetti. During the next few years the letterheads of Communist front organizations were decorated with the names of many writers, artists, and scholars who had figured prominently in the defense of the Charlestown prisoners. For years Heywood Broun did the party's work in the Newspaper Guild. Dos Passos was almost alone in declining to join the lengthening procession of fellow travelers.

Was this the ideological legacy of Sacco and Vanzetti? Scarcely. The men were anarchists, and even as they were arrested, Lenin and Trotsky in Russia were busy liquidating their anarchist opposition. Cynically, the party and its defense arm, the International Labor Defense, exploited the case for what it was worth in kudos and collections, and then befouled their memories to promote the expansion of a police state that had developed the mass production of frameups as an instrument of rule.

One of the most valuable services of the present volume is that it makes the true legacy of Sacco and Vanzetti clear beyond any possible doubt. It roots the legend where it belongs, in the soil of libertarian faith and aspiration. In 1926, Vanzetti wrote in prison:

"In Russia this happened: The Czarism was destroyed by revolution: part of the owners were expropriated; a party took the power, stopped the continuation of expropriation and appropriated to itself that part of the social wealth which had already been expropriated by the people. From that moment the revolution began its regression and a few leaders of a small party became the only real rulers of Russia. They were immediately compelled to form a national army and build a policy worse than the Czar's one; to uphold a new church, not better than the old one; and, given the conditions, to be more reactionary and tyrannic than the dethroned autocracy itself. . . ."

Professor Joughin quotes from the hundreds of poems, stories, novels, and plays based on the Sacco and Vanzetti story. The four chapters contributed by Professor Morgan will be of especial interest to students of the law. Rarely has a collaboration been so intelligently planned or so capably executed as this one. Here is the Sacco-Vanzetti legend complete. It can yet serve us well in life as in letters.

BOOK REVIEWERS IN THIS ISSUE

L. B. NAMIER, professor of history at the University of Manchester, was formerly political adviser to the Jewish Agency.

ISAAC ROSENFELD is the author of a novel, *Passage from Home*.

RAYMOND ROSENTHAL, now working on his first novel, reviews frequently for COMMENTARY.

IRVING A. SANES' short story, "The True Life of Max Bobber," appeared in the December 1948 COMMENTARY.

LILLIAN BLUMBERG is studying for her doctorate at New York University.

JAMES RORTY's latest book is *Tomorrow's Food*.

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From an address by FRANK W. ABRAMS,
Chairman of the Board, Standard Oil Company (New Jersey)

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